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A RECORD OF

AN ATTEMPT TO CARRY OUT THE PRINCIPLES
OF CHRISTIAN UNSELFISHNESS AND
SCIENTIFIC RACE-IMPROVEMENT

BY

ALLAN ESTLAKE

MEMBER OF THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

LONDON
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1900

PREFACE

HAVING been absorbingly interested from early youth in the undertaking of which this small volume is an account, I think a few words are necessary to explain why a treatise on the subject seems to me of cardinal importance to the human race. The progress of thought in theology, since the time of the Reformation, has been of such a nature that almost all earnest minds are now asking themselves whether there is any logical halting-place between the Roman Catholic position and an utter scepticism in regard to those doctrines which alone give value and dignity to life. Convinced that the true halting-place was provided by the Founder of the Community which is here briefly sketched, I felt that too much could not be done to bring the claims of that Founder before the public. With regard to the ethical, social and economic aspects of his movement, my conviction is that they represent in outline the ultimate ideal which the human race should strive to attain, and the only ideal which will solve the problems that have agitated mankind throughout all history. At the same time, this sketch is not offered to the public with the belief that a new *voluntary* association on a

small scale, similar to that which is here described, would be a desirable sequel to that which has been attempted in the past. On the contrary, the past attempt, with the considerable success that attended it through an entire generation, and the superlative success of the first twenty years of its existence, seem to me useful to mankind, not as a model for slavish imitation by a small body of persons voluntarily associated, but as a hint of the direction in which *political* change in the world at large should gradually move during the next few generations.

The following is a mere preliminary sketch of the most extraordinary and, it is believed, the most valuable enterprise which has ever been undertaken since the foundation of Christianity. If the public interest warrants, it will be followed by a very much more complete and authoritative work, containing voluminous details which have necessarily been omitted from the present pamphlet. The joint stock company ("Oneida Community, Limited"), which has succeeded to the businesses of the Oneida Community, is still in existence and prospering greatly. Its principal office is at Kenwood, Madison County, New York State. Letters addressed there to George W. Noyes, making enquiry about the past history of the Community will receive careful attention.

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THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

CHAPTER I

"Historical."

If Christianity is the highest evolution of civilisation, an organisation of social life that is based upon the fundamental principle of Christianity will be the highest type among the many attempts at socialism that have brightened the lives of thousands during the past century. Such an organisation, in so far as it attains harmony, realises Christ's ideal "Kingdom of Heaven" no matter what its locality or creed may be, because harmony constitutes heaven, and no greater happiness is conceivable.

If John H. Noyes could harmonise his followers into a family of loving relations and happiness, it was not a fanatical proceeding, nor chimerical as some assume, when he founded the Oneida Community and declared it to be the Kingdom of Heaven. If he was too sanguine it was because he credited Christendom with some earnestness in seeking the happiness it craved, and with a higher cerebral development than his critics put in evidence. It was no fault of his

that he lived before the people were ready for him, any more than Christ was to blame for trying to teach a people what they were unable to receive. Each was the product of ages and ages of evolution leading up to a civilisation that could call forth just such men at just such a time. It would seem no better than a fool's presumption for men to question nature's appointments, so long as they fail to comprehend her mode of regeneration, or even to understand how the ovum changes into caterpillar, then to chrysalis, and from that to butterfly, or where is the end of each life, and the beginning of another. There is no more chance in nature's production of a prophet or a seer, than there is in the evolution of butterflies from ova. He comes in response to a demand for just such teachers, but the demand results from ages of evolution leading up to the state of civilisation that creates the necessity ; by parity of reasoning it will appear that the response cannot come by any chance or sudden impulse of nature, but that the coincidence of innumerable events and conditions is equally indispensable to the projecting of a prophet or a teacher among men, as to the development of the civilisation that makes the demand and is the result of as many ages of evolution.

It is easier to think of epochs being reached in evolution among other people than those now

living, or in other countries and other times than the present; therefore, in Christ's day it was said that no man was a prophet in his own country, and since that time it has been held that the age of miracles (*i.e.* phenomena of Nature not understood by man) has been passed.

Selection of the Semitic Race as a chosen civilisation through which to introduce the Messiah appeared ridiculous to the people of A.D. But that it came about by chance, rather than in the purpose of primal Intelligence, would seem a more ridiculous idea, in face of the facts that under the influence of the Messiah has evolved the advanced civilisation of to-day, and that after 1900 years of persecution and oppression, the Jews control the policies of all the nations of the earth, and are fast becoming the primogenitors of the coming population of the American continent.

After the lapse of another 1900 years it will be easier to understand the purpose of primal Causation in the American nation of to-day, and recognising the spiritual significance of events that now appear trivial, to place in appropriate niches her prominent reformers of this period. In His own good time Christ came and sowed the seed, and many have been, and still more will be, the messengers who from time to time will supplement His work and share His experience. The

truth must be presented at different epochs and in different forms that are adapted to advancing civilisation and to the demands of higher developments of brain. Presentations of truth that were well calculated to impress the animal man when he was entirely under the influence of the cerebellum would now be ridiculous and puerile, and the same principle holds at every stage of consciousness, till the appeal to the cerebrum for recognition of truth must be as different from anything that could impress the back brain as light is from darkness. Simply a token, or an image that did not rise to the dignity of "graven," satisfied the soul of the savage, and a materialistic form of worship still satisfies many minds in nineteenth century civilisation, solely because they exercise no mind in the matter, but relegate thought on spiritual subjects to a paid priesthood.

Progression proceeded along the line of animal life, developing physique, thus providing the best and healthiest material for brain to feed upon. Under such fostering the first atom of grey matter gradually evolved, hinting at mental potentialities that are only transcended by the infinite possibilities of spiritual development. When men begin to realise their limitations in the line of mental achievements, they will be preparing suitable conditions for the recognition

of nature's demand for regeneration; in other words, for the reception of Christ and of His messengers. **OF THE LATTER, JOHN H. NOYES WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT AND CENTRAL.** His message was "Salvation from sin" as the necessary and most logical test of regeneration. He heralded again the kingdom of heaven, that had been declared nineteen hundred years before as being then near "at hand (*in the invisible world*)," to be now a present possession *on earth*, wherein Christ is reigning with His people *in this sphere*, requiring only their recognition to enable them to enter in and share with Him the joy of nature's higher evolution upon the spiritual plane.

The Oneida Community marked an important era in the evolution of the Christian Church. It was "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace;" an expression of the spiritual condition of each individual member. If each member realised "The kingdom of heaven within," it can easily be seen that the consensus of their experiences constituted the kingdom of heaven that Christ predicted. The objection that the Oneida Community ceased to exist, and therefore could not have been the Christians' ideal kingdom, is not admissible, because the ideal Heaven is neither a place nor an organisation but a spiritual condition. **During an entire generation the Oneida Community**

fulfilled all the requirements of an ideal home of harmony. The generation passed away, each and every member of it taking his spiritual conditions with him, to meet on another plane of life, in a family relation of which their happy communal environment here had been a type and foretaste, so that, in the most important sense, the Oneida Community still lives in the souls of those who have passed on to a posthumous life, as it does in this life in the hearts of thousands who have been made happier and whose lives have been brightened by what they have learned from the experience of the Oneida Community.

It could not be expected that the regenerated nature of the original members would be transmitted in its fullness to their offspring. It would be unlikely for any characteristics to become completely ingrained in one or two generations, because sudden developments are not according to nature's usual mode. If they were, Christ and His disciples would have procreated and peopled the world with a regenerated race. The change they sought was a slow development of the spiritual nature of man *leading up to* regeneration. In the same way, John H. Noyes and his community sowed a seed that is germinating in the hearts of thousands of people, and to-day there is no subject

so dear to the people, or that will attract so fond attention as that which relates to the happy family relation on a higher plane and, incidentally, to the Oneida Community, as an object lesson and exemplar of the possibility of realising here the joy of that "sweet by and by."

Some time hence, when the practical life of the Oneida Community shall bear fruit, and when, through propagation by wise selection, the higher spiritual traits of character shall have become as easily and certainly transmitted as the worst are now, communal life will prevail, and it will be as difficult to introduce discord among people as now it is to promote harmony.

It will be instructive in this connection to canvass some of the incidents that led up to the incorporation of the company called "The Oneida Community, Limited," and to note how, as the original members ceased to take an active part, the old Community gradually lost the strong spiritual bond which had previously united its members, and on that account adopted the next highest means of combination as being suited to the changed spiritual condition that now prevailed among them. Pressure from without could have had no power to break up the Community so long as the true spirit prevailed within. No minister can "lay the flattering unction to his soul" of having persecuted

it to the death, for sects usually thrive under mere persecution.

While, as before stated, it could not be expected that the spirit of unity could become completely ingrained in one generation, yet *the traits of character that made John H. Noyes what he was, mingled with those of his wife, were transmitted in a very marked degree to their son Theodore R. Noyes.* He was brought up in the Community and took his medical diploma at Yale University. It by no means follows that, in the transmission of characteristic traits, those traits shall assume identically the same expression in the progeny as in the ancestor. A portrait painter may transmit artistic talent, but it may not—probably would not—express itself in portrait painting in his progeny, there being many other ways in which art could express itself; and the same is true of every trait capable of transmission.

Dr Noyes inherited, from both parents, a strong religious nature, but it expressed itself in a different way from either parent because it developed under a different environment. If the child of a devout Roman Catholic or of a Scotch Presbyterian inherited its parents' religious traits, it would very probably follow in their footsteps, whether Roman Catholic or Scotch Presbyterian, because it would be en-

vironed by the bias of those conditions. But *the environment under which Dr Noyes grew up was one of fearless investigation prompted by the well-grounded assurance*[1] *of being in possession of central truth.* This provided conditions through which higher intelligence could develop alien views. The same religious strain that urged his father beyond the pale of the churches led the son beyond the pale of certain phases of

[1] The career and inspiration of John H. Noyes, the providential experience of the Community, and the closely knit logical consistency of its religious doctrines and scriptural exegesis, so antithetical to the loose and self-contradictory and sometimes crude theologies of the sects, were well calculated to beget this assurance. It would probably never have faded in any of the members but for the wellnigh irresistible tide of fashionable agnosticism (the ebbing of which we are only now beginning to witness) which swept over the world in the sixth and seventh decades of this century. And at this moment there are probably no other cultivated people on earth who have as strong a conviction of the providential government of the world as most of the old members of the Oneida Community. It is in startling and significant contrast with that mere "*yearning* to believe" which is so pathetic a phenomenon among the educated classes at the present day. And even among those ex-members who have least belief in a personal providence, past experiences in the Community render untenable the crude and vulgar presuppositions of modern materialism. Those experiences necessitate, in the judgment of those agnostic members who have had a careful philosophic training, the ascription to living human beings of a mysterious nature adequate to account for such inspiration as shall seem to its possessor and his associates to be supernatural (at least to the extent to which his *daimonion* seemed to Socrates to be supernatural) and, where susceptible of verification, inerrant. —F.

Christianity but within the spirit of what Christ taught. Though passing by some of the doctrines ascribed to Christ, he was most earnest in cultivating the Love of which Christ was the Incarnation. He proved himself an organiser of rank inferior only to the highest of all, and was, undoubtedly, the only man in the Community capable of carrying on his father's work, if any one could.

John H. Noyes held that a man's work was not complete until he had educated his successor. His son was his only possible successor and no one recognised better than he the elements of transcendent fitness which Dr Noyes possessed. But complications had come into the problem of leading the society, that did not exist at its inception. The original members of the Community had all been members of churches, and most of them had been studying Mr Noyes' writings or attending his ministry. These brought in children with them who, it is safe to say, did not fully inherit the religious enthusiasm of their parents. To form an idea of the difficulties which Mr Noyes had to encounter towards the close of his career it will be necessary to go into some qualitative analysis of the organisations from which they emanated.

Churches are societies composed of as many different kinds of people, or, rather, of as many

differing spiritual experiences as there are members. As nearly as they may be classified, they are, first, those who have what they call "experienced religion," or "been converted," but the initial step toward regeneration has so exalted them that, in the flush of their enthusiasm, they mistake the foundation for the finished structure, and instead of building up the ideal Christian life on the basic principle of Love, they assume that they are "the taught of God," and presume to teach others, or become missionaries, before they have themselves been grounded in the rudiments of their new religious experience. Such usually settle down, after the first excitement, into a self-righteous complacency which, if not balanced by strong honesty of purpose, developes into a life of chronic hypocrisy.

Others retain the impetus of the new life, the nature of which is to soar to transcendental heights in search of truth, anywhere, everywhere, and in whatever guise, free as the spirit of the truth it seeks. But these, being trammelled by traditions, creeds and dogmas, give birth to a spurious Christianity; the natural flow of the spirit becomes obstructed and it dashes itself at the point of least resistance on the animal instead of the spiritual plane. Christendom, therefore, presents the anomaly of people "born of the spirit," "living after the flesh," seeking to express

spiritual truth by creating a materialistic and fictitious environment. They demand compliance with creed and with certain traditions of Christ, more than with the spirit of the truth He inculcated. They ask for oral profession of dogma rather than the confession made by a Christian life. They proselytise because they rely upon the potency of "authorities" rather than on the power of truth to express itself through a life of truthfulness, and they insist upon the acceptance of a traditional Christ built upon traditions and ideals in accordance with the creed ascribed to their favourite authority.

Still others have experienced no religious awakening, but, growing up from childhood in their church, or joining it from motives of expediency, become simply partisans of their minister, without troubling themselves to make other than a show of respectability.

In addition to these, almost every congregation numbers a few simple-minded, honest-hearted, faithful people. They are "the salt of the earth," and their saving presence constitutes the only spiritual element in the churches that entitles them to any claim of Christianity.

Community families are societies like churches, and in so far as the members are those who have seceded from churches, the same conditions will be perpetuated, in a greater or less degree, in any

society formed by them, that obtained in the church organisation to which they belonged. All the characteristics of church membership were represented, in a modified form, in the Oneida Community, and they complicated the difficulties which attended the selection of a fitting future leader.

John H. Noyes recognised in his son's innate love of truth, although not leading him to the acceptance of certain dogmas, a legitimate fruition of the spirit of Christ, and in the power of promoting unity among his associates a transcendent qualification for the position of leader. But to place him there was a problem, the solution of which called for the wisest diplomacy.

The older members were not without misgiving, but relied upon the good judgment and inspiration of their tried leader.

Another class, less tractable, could see nothing but a sceptic in the man who had dared to develop the fruits of the spirit of Christ in any other way than through their prescribed methods of professing unqualified belief in some of the doctrines of traditional Christianity. They therefore strenuously opposed his leadership.

Last, but not least, there were some who thoroughly believed in Dr Noyes' supreme fitness for the position of paramount leader on the

ground of his transcendent ability and absolute integrity.

In the face of many difficulties Mr Noyes placed his son at the head of the Community, and afterwards deposed him when the opposition became so pronounced that he could do no otherwise without injury to the Society. This promotion and retirement, as the distressing exigencies of the case demanded, was attended with much suffering to the sensitive nature of him who was the subject of it. Some who sympathised deeply with Dr Noyes withdrew from the Community rather than raise painful issues, feeling assured that the division of feeling must ere long necessitate its disbandment. This was an event which no leader could avert or greatly postpone. It was looked forward to with aching hearts by all, and none except Dr Noyes could see a way through it without disastrous consequences to most of them, and especially to the aged and the children. It was at this juncture that he signally proved his ability by a successful solution of the problem, which satisfied all the interests concerned.

The Society had become rich; but if its property had been sold and the proceeds divided among three hundred people, it would have given little enough to any of them; and if some had gotten more than their share, others must have

taken, probably, less than they could have lived on. To avoid anything like injustice, and to treat every interest tenderly, the property was carefully appraised. None of the industries were suspended for a moment. All the changes were made upon paper. A joint-stock company was formed, and the shares were distributed among the members in such a way that those who had put in money received a proportional sum with interest, and a *pro rata* amount was also awarded according to the number of years each had been a member. Provision was also made for each child, sufficient for care and education and a start in life after attaining majority. A scale of wages was also arranged for those who wished to work in any of the company's industries, and some of the co-operative features are still retained, so that those who wish can live in the buildings, and get everything at cost.

This disposition was a master stroke, and *Dr Noyes' success in this peaceful transformation of the Community was second only to his father's work in forming it.*

According to the fitness of things, Dr Noyes occupies the position of president of the company, elected thereto by the votes of the stockholders. In other words, he has evolved into the position of successor to his father, as far as his father now needs a successor, by the natural order of events.

He has earned the confidence of all as a business organiser, and will supplement his father's labour of love by promoting peace and harmony, as circumstances afford opportunity. Dr Noyes' policy, so far, points to the realisation of his father's hope, as expressed in his "History of American Socialisms"—"that *the next phase of national history will be that of Revivalism and Socialism harmonized and working together for the Kingdom of Heaven.*"

CHAPTER II

"The Founder of the Oneida Community."

HAVING glanced, in a general way, at the principles and origin of communism, beginning with the gregarious habits of primitive races, and culminating in the Oneida Community of the nineteenth century, readers will be interested to gain some more succinct idea of the internal working of that body, and primarily, of the history or religious experience of that remarkable man, who, emerging from the hot-bed of orthodoxy, founded a society, the sexual purity of which shook the wickedness of orthodox prudery to its shallow foundations. This chapter, therefore, is devoted to the founder, and the following ones to some notice of what he founded and the foundation upon which he built.

John H. Noyes graduated at Dartmouth College in 1830. He was then in his nineteenth year, and commenced the study of law in his native town, Putney, Vermont.

Quoting from an account of his "Religious Experience," from which publication all the matter of this chapter is culled, he says: "At the end of a year my attention was called to the subject

of religion by a protracted meeting in Putney. After a painful process of conviction, in which the conquest of my aversion to becoming a minister was one of the critical points, I submitted to God, and obtained spiritual peace. . . . On one occasion, at this period, in conversation with my father, who was fond of theological argument, I suggested an interpretation of some passage of Scripture which he thought was new. 'Take care,' said he; 'that is heresy.' 'Heresy or not,' said I, 'it is true.' 'But if you are to be a minister,' said he, 'you must think and preach as the rest of the ministers do; if you get out of the traces, they will whip you in.' I was very indignant at this suggestion, and replied, 'Never! Never will I be whipped by ministers or anybody else into views that do not commend themselves to my understanding, as guided by the Bible and enlightened by the Spirit.'

"Four weeks after my conversion, I went to Andover, and was admitted to the theological seminary. I had imagined that Christians everywhere were full of love and zeal, and that especially a theological seminary, where the choice young men of all the churches gather, was a little less heavenly than a habitation of angels. Fresh as I was from the world, and from the study of law, I had some misgivings as to the reception such a Saul would meet

with, and the figure he would make in the 'school of the prophets.' A short acquaintance with the seminary, however, dispelled these imaginations, and occasioned misgivings of another sort. I soon found that learning was a matter of far greater account with theological students, generally, than spirituality, and that Andover was a very poor place for one who vowed to live in the 'revival of spirit,' and be a 'young convert' for ever."

After being at Andover a year he left, and in the fall of 1832 became a member of the middle class in the Yale Theological Seminary. He remained there till February 1834, when he became a Perfectionist. It was his intention to become a missionary in Africa, and while at Andover he became interested in the Anti-slavery cause and took part in the formation of one of the earliest Anti-slavery societies in the country. But as he progressed in spiritual life, he began to doubt whether true Christianity in its full saving operation was so extensively diffused in this country as he had imagined. He says: "As I lost confidence in the religion around me, and saw more and more the need there was of a re-conversion of most of those who professed Christianity, my outward bound missionary zeal declined, and my heart turned toward thoughts, desires, and projects of an

internal reformation of Christendom. Quality of religion, instead of quantity, became my centre of attraction."

The various stages of his experience, and the processes by which he reasoned with himself and others, while working out his special doctrines, are extremely interesting, so that it is most difficult to decide what to select and what to omit to avoid occupying more space than is available. It is simply impossible to cull the best points when the whole subject is of pure gold. His profession of perfection gained for him the reputation of being crazy, but he says: "I certainly did not at this time regard myself as perfect in any such sense as excludes the expectation of discipline and improvement. On the contrary, from the very beginning my heart's most earnest desire and prayer to God was that I might be 'made perfect by full fellowship with the sufferings of Christ;' and from that time till now, all my tribulations have been occasions of thanksgiving, because I have regarded them as answers to that first prayer, and as pledges of God's faithfulness in completing the work then begun. The distinction between being free from sin on the one hand, and being past all improvement on the other, however obscure it may be to some, was plain to me as soon as I knew by experience what

freedom from sin really is. To those who endeavoured to confound that distinction, and to crowd me into a profession of unimprovable perfection, I said: 'I do not pretend to perfection in externals. I only claim purity of heart and the answer of a good conscience toward God. A book may be true and perfect in sentiment, and yet be deficient in graces of style and typographical accuracy.'"

Mr Noyes had been licensed to preach, and for some time past had been expounding the new truths of the "second coming of Christ"[1] and of "salvation from sin," to audiences which were so interested that the faculty became alarmed, and revoking his license requested him to leave the college. Referring to this period he wrote:—

"I had now lost my standing in the Free Church, in the ministry, and in the college. My good name in the great world was gone. My friends were fast falling away. I was beginning to be an outcast; yet I rejoiced and leaped for joy. Sincerely, I declared that 'I was glad when I got rid of my reputation.' Some person asked me whether I should continue to preach, now that the clergy had taken away my license. I replied, 'I have taken away their license to sin, and they keep on sinning;

[1] *i.e.* the truth that the second coming of Christ took place immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

so, though they have taken away my license to preach, I shall keep on preaching.'"

The following narration of some of his experiences with Charles H. Weld, and his final separating of himself from his influence by the scathing letter which terminated their intimacy, is given here to show that while he was naturally retiring and diffident, treating all whom he regarded as honestly seeking truth with the utmost tenderness that the kindest of hearts could dictate, yet, when thrown in contact with a spirit of hypocrisy and deceit, he readily donned his armour of righteousness in repelling the evil, and spared neither friend nor foe in its denunciation. He had become acquainted with the Revivalist preacher, Boyle, and others of his stamp who, after they had become converts to his peculiar doctrines, were his intimate friends and co-workers. Quoting still from his "Religious Experience":—

"Charles H. Weld was living with a brother at Hartford at the time when I commenced the testimony of holiness. He was a licensed minister. . . . Boyle introduced us to each other at the close of a meeting, and gave me some account of Weld's experience. We soon became very intimate. There was much in his character that attracted my sympathy. He was profoundly versed in spiritual mysteries, was highly intellectual, and seemed to

be filled with the most holy benevolence. We were never weary of conversing with each other. I respected his apparent wisdom, and was very willing and desirous to profit by it.

"I soon found that there was a tendency in him to assume a fatherly relation toward me. He received my communications on the subject of holiness, the second coming, &c., with readiness and deference; but criticised my manner of presenting them as being too abrupt and alarming. He gave me to understand that he had exercised a sort of paternal supervision over Finney, Boyle, Lansing, his brother Theodore, and others; and it was not long before he established himself as privy counsellor to me. In fact it appeared from his account of his experience, that he had in a certain sense preceded me in the truth. I learned from him that when he was at Andover, some eight or ten years before, he passed through a series of spiritual exercises in which full redemption of soul and body was set before him as attainable, and was promised to him on condition of his practising certain austerities for a specific period. He failed to fulfil the conditions, and in consequence fell into a state of horrible despair, from the effects of which he had never entirely recovered. This experience, however, gave him so much advantage in comprehending and judging my disclosures, that he considered

himself as in some sense entitled to take the lead of me. I did not object, for I certainly had no idea at that time of being a leader myself.

"I perceived, however, in process of time that this plan of softening down my testimony did not work well in his own case. . . . I began to fall back upon my own judgment, and proposed more decisive measures. . . . Boyle was at this time approaching the crisis of his convictions. . . . I endeavoured to bring Weld also to a decision, and partially succeeded. But his confession was not prompt and unequivocal, like Boyle's, and was attended with no satisfactory results. He remained some days in his usual doubtful position. At last I told him plainly that his mild method of treating his case would never effect anything; that he must look the law of God in the face, and submit to the full pressure of the truth that 'he that committeth sin is of the devil.' He assented to what I said, and seemed willing that I should deal with him according to my own judgment.

"This was on the day of the State Fast. Boyle was absent, attending a protracted meeting in a neighbouring town, and had requested Weld to fill his place in the services of the day at the Free Church. After the conversation just mentioned, he conducted the public services

of the forenoon in the usual manner, but with considerable embarrassment. During the intermission he told me that he could not preach in the afternoon, for God had made it clear to him that I ought to take his place. I told him that I had no objection to preaching in the afternoon, if the deacons of the church were willing. He obtained their consent. I told him that if I preached, I should say some cruel things. He bid me follow my own heart.

"He went into the desk with me, and introduced me to the congregation with a frank confession of his confidence in the truth of the doctrines I taught, and an exhortation to candour. He then took his seat among the congregation. . . .

"In the midst of my discourse I was interrupted by a strange sound. I looked around and saw Weld sitting with his eyes closed, his countenance black with horror, his hands waving up and down, and his lungs labouring with long and rattling breaths. The congregation was in great agitation; many rose from their seats, some left the house. I spoke to Weld, but he made no answer. His paroxysm grew worse. His breathing became a frightful roar. The waving of his hands increased, till he appeared like one swimming for life. It was the most awful scene of agony I ever witnessed. Many

fled from it in dismay. At length a crisis came, and the horrible symptoms began to abate. Weld gradually became quiet, and finally gleams of joy appeared on his countenance. He opened his eyes, and stood up, assuming a most majestic attitude. His face grew brighter and brighter. He gazed slowly around upon the people with an eye of angelic brilliancy. At length he fixed his gaze upon a young man, with whom he had lately disputed about the doctrine of holiness. He said nothing, but there was a lion in his eye. The young man quailed. In the same way he singled out another opposer of holiness, and he too quailed. Finally, his eye met mine. I looked at him steadily. His countenance softened into a smile, and he dropped his eye.

"After this he relapsed partially into his former state of horror. The congregation retired. I remained with a few others till the paroxysm passed off, and then conducted him to his room at Mr Boyle's.

"His own account of the immediate occasion of his distress was this: From the beginning of my discourse the words of my mouth, he said, were like fire to his spirit. They scorched him more and more, till he could endure no longer, and he thought of rising and smiting me in the pulpit. Instantly upon this the word came to him — 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my

prophet no harm.' Then he began to sink into the fathomless depths of despair."

During an extended visit to New York, Mr Noyes passed through a series of spiritual experiences that are as interesting as they were extraordinary. He sums up some of the results of those experiences as follows :—

"What we positively know is all the mental capital we can count upon as safe and available. What we guess, think, believe, and hope to be true, is paper capital, that may be genuine or may be counterfeit—redeemable or irredeemable. If there is among it any valuable truth, it is like grain yet mixed up with the chaff, not fit for use till it has been winnowed. It is well enough to have on hand a great heap of guesses. But we must not think of living on them, or using them as winnowed truths, nor must we allow them to get mixed up with our store of known verities. The true method of mental economy is to look over the whole mass of our thoughts, select out all that we absolutely know, and keep that by itself, accounting it our specie-basis. If it is but a small store, never mind. A little silver and gold is worth more than a bushel of counterfeit bills. Then we may go on to examine and work up our heap of guesses, so as to convert them as soon as possible into known truths, taking good care not to add any of them to our sure treasure,

till we have thoroughly tested them. This is the only way to get and keep a sound mind."

Returning to Putney, his mother and brother Horatio became converts to his teachings. After this he spent some six months at New Haven in connection with a publication called the "New Haven Perfectionist," and then returned to Putney. Of this time he writes:—

"After I had been here some weeks, Lovett came on from Brimfield and joined me in my labours. About the same time also I received a letter from Charles H. Weld, saying that he had just returned from a visit to T. R. Gates, whom he found to be 'pure gold,' and proposing to come to Putney and spend some time with me. In reply I gave him a cordial invitation to come, and he soon made his appearance. 'The burden and heat of the day' in this region, however, was past before these brethren joined me.

"Weld was at this time in correspondence with Mrs Carrington, a lady living somewhere in the State of New York, who had recently been converted to Perfectionism by his labours, and was soaring in the highest regions of ecstasy and boasting. She maintained for a time a pre-eminent position as spiritual critic, but afterwards abandoned the faith and became insane. Her letters at this time were specially spiced with censures of my carnality and worldly wisdom.

Weld read them in public and private, as very valuable documents. . . .

"At this period, I had a warm discussion with my father on the expediency of my tracing out and suppressing the base lies which were in very brisk circulation about me. He insisted that I ought to defend myself. I told him that I had other business to do, and could not stop to obey the dictates of what I regarded as worldly wisdom. The result of the dispute was that I notified him of my readiness to withdraw, if my course did not please him; and he told me I might go. Accordingly, I instantly removed with Weld to the house of Mr Cutler, who was at that time a warm friend of the doctrine of holiness. Here we remained till we left Putney. I had no expectation at that time of any further favour from my father. But in the course of a few months, he became reconciled to me, invited me home, and ever afterwards treated me with much kindness. The calumnies which occasioned this separation, and which were at that time and long afterwards carried to a desperate extent by the church-party in Putney, ultimately killed themselves. The stories told became more and more improbable and foolish, till at last the story-tellers themselves did not believe them. Slander, like a baseless currency, or a soap-bubble, often bursts and comes to an end by its own inflation. . . .

"The war of wills which had commenced between me and Weld continued and increased as we journeyed on together, and after we reached New Haven. There was no external dissension between us, but a conscious antagonism and strife of spirit and intellects—a continual reasoning with each other, carried on not by words, but by the direct language of heart and brain. My sensations were as follows:—A spiritual influence from Weld (sorcery, perhaps, it should be called) would engage me in a kind of internal debate, similar to that which often occurs in cases of morbid conscientiousness. I would find myself driven to the alternative of either sinking under the oppressive spell, or breaking it by out-reasoning its subtleties. If any one asks how I knew that it came from Weld, I answer, first, because it always involved in some way or other the old question of his pre-eminence; and secondly, because when I communicated with him externally, I always found him in a process of internal strife parallel with mine. At length, after beating off his enchantments again and again without any lasting relief, and seeing no end to the struggle but in the destruction of one or both of us, I told him that I had come to the conclusion that the issue between us was, whether he or I had the stronger mind; and that when that question should be settled one or the other must fall. He

assented to this view of the matter. We had no further conversation till the 'winding up.' After a day or two of infinite spiritual hair-splittings, with alternate advantage and defeat, I brought his spirit into a corner from which there was no retreat. . . . Then I went to him and told him that I had won the victory. His thoughts were ready for mine. I explained to him in a very few words the advantage which I had over him. He perceived it. There was no dispute, no bitterness between us. I went immediately out with an instinctive apprehension of evil upon me, and for an hour walked the fields south of the city in agony, such as one may be supposed to have who, in a struggle to escape a whirlpool, barely succeeds. It was sympathy with his sinking. When I returned I found without surprise that he had suffered a second paroxysm of horror similar to that which occurred in the Free Church the year before. Here was the end of my personal intercourse with Charles H. Weld. Subsequently I wrote him the . . . letter of renunciation to close my account with him."

Returning, at length, to Putney, Mr Noyes says that he "commenced in earnest the enterprise of repairing the disaster of Perfectionism, and establishing it on a permanent foundation; not by preaching and stirring up excitement over a large field, as we had done at the beginning,

nor by labouring to reorganise and discipline broken and corrupted regiments, as I had done at Prospect, but by devoting myself to the patient instruction of a few simple-minded, unpretending believers, chiefly belonging to my father's family. I had now come to regard the quality of the proselytes of holiness as more important than their quantity; and the quality which I preferred was not that meteoric brightness which I had so often seen miserably extinguished, but sober and even timid honesty. This I found in the little circle of believers at Putney; and the Bible schools which I commenced among them in the winter of 1836 proved to be to me, and to the cause of holiness, the beginning of better days."

The "little circle" above referred to was the nucleus of the Putney community, which included Mr Noyes and his wife, his sisters Harriet and Charlotte with their husbands, and his brother, George W. Noyes, and which subsequently developed into the Oneida Community.

CHAPTER III

"Polyandry."

THE community encouraged the greatest possible candour with those wishing to join, and probation afforded the best opportunity of investigating, at short range, the practical working out of their social theory and kindred subjects that seemed impossible for some to comprehend at a distance.

There were those who had been readers of the Community publications for many years, and who had corresponded with one or more of the members for a long while, but who knew so little about themselves, that while their great anxiety had been lest their wives should be unable to adapt themselves to the new relations, it turned out that they were themselves the first to become jealous and dissatisfied with the circumstances they had pleaded so hard and so long to get into.

In such cases, of course, the wife assumed the major position which her husband had failed to fulfil, and he perforce of circumstances must "learn by the things which he suffered," according to natural law, until he could realise his own weakness and selfishness, and gladly avail himself of the loving help extended to him by those

with whom he had sought alliance. If he proved not to be sufficiently in earnest to hold his life to the refining process of criticism, he would be advised to take his family outside until the way should be made clear for all or any of them to return. Such a course usually resulted in the return of all or some of the family, but in any event, friendly relations were always maintained.

The difficulty in all such cases arose out of the social usages of the community, not because the applicants had any objections on that score, for in no case had they any. They had canvassed the subject carefully, and becoming conversant with the Community principles, had accepted them. But what they did not understand was the crucial nature of the test of unselfishness when practically applied in their social nature. Many were ready to give up everything but the petty authority that they had been accustomed to exercise in their family circles; one may have been ready to have an enlargement of affectional happiness himself, but could not concede the same freedom to other members of his family. Another could not cease to be the little autocrat and listen to his wife while, with others, she joined in criticising him.

These, one and all, lacked the one thing needful. Christ's test of the rich young man

was "yet lackest thou one thing; go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." He knew wherein the man was weak, and he gave him the appropriate test. John H. Noyes knew wherein the curse of selfishness asserted itself most generally in the civilisation of the nineteenth century, and he applied the test: "That they who have wives should be as though they had none." Men must leave women to be as free as they desire to be themselves. This was the crucial test of man's love to his fellow man; without that love he was unfit for community life.

No matter what his other qualifications may be, if a man cannot love a woman and be happy in seeing her loved by others, he is a selfish man, and his place is with the potsherds of the earth. There is no place for such in the "Kingdom of Heaven."

The departure from the ways of the world, in social practice, was from the first intended as a dividing line between selfishness and unselfishness; far from being an expression of laciviousness, it was used as a test of sincerity; and John H. Noyes, who was the first to lead his followers out of loyalty to the marriage institution, was the first to call a halt and to propose a return, not to the *principle*, but to the *practice* of monogamic marriage. This will be seen in the following

message from John H. Noyes to the Oneida Community, dated August 20th, 1879, and published in the *American Socialist*, August 28th, 1879:

"I need hardly remind the Community that we have always claimed freedom of conscience to change our social practices, and have repeatedly offered to abandon the offensive part of our system of communism if so required by public opinion. We have lately pledged ourselves in our publications to loyally obey any new legislation which may be instituted against us. Many of you will remember that I have frequently said within the last year that I did not consider our present social arrangements an essential part of our profession as Christian Communists, and that we shall probably have to recede from them sooner or later. I think the time has come for us to act on these principles of freedom, and I offer for your consideration the following modifications of our practical platform. I propose:

"(1) That we give up the practice of complex marriage, not as renouncing belief in the principles and prospective finality of that institution, but in deference to the public sentiment which is evidently rising against it.

2. That we place ourselves not on the platform of the Shakers, on the one hand, nor of

the world on the other, but on Paul's platform which allows marriage but prefers celibacy. To carry out this change, it will be necessary first of all that we should go into a new and earnest study of the 7th chapter, 1 Cor., in which Paul fully defines his position, and also that of the Lord Jesus Christ, in regard to the sexual relations proper for the Church in the presence of worldly institutions. If you accept these modifications, the Community will consist of two distinct classes—the married and the celibate —both legitimate, but the last preferred.

What will become of communism after these modifications, may be defined thus :

1. We shall hold our property and businesses in common, as now.

2. We shall live together in a common household and eat at a common table, as now.

3. We shall have a common children's department, as now.

4. We shall have our daily evening meetings, and all of our present means of moral and spiritual improvement.

Surely here is communism enough to hold us together and inspire us with heroism for a new career. With the breeze of general goodwill in our favour, which even Professor Mears has promised us on the condition of our giving up the 'immoral features' of our system, what

new wonders of success may we not hope for in the years to come?

For my part, I think we have great cause to be thankful for the toleration which has so long been accorded to our audacious experiment. Especially are we indebted to the authorities and people of our immediate neighbourhood for kindness and protection. It will be a good and gracious thing for us to relieve them at last of the burden of our unpopularity, and show the world that Christian Communism has self-control and flexibility enough to live and flourish without complex marriage.

J. H. Noyes."

"The above message was considered by the Oneida Community in full assembly, August 26th, 1879, and its propositions accepted; and it is to be understood that from the present date the Community will consist of two classes of members, namely, celibates, or those who prefer to live a life of sexual abstinence, and the married, who practice only the sexual freedom which strict monogamy allows. The Community will now look for the sympathy and encouragement which have been so liberally promised in case this change should ever be made."—(From the *American Socialist*, Aug. 28, 1879.)

Many of the leading newspapers published

this message with editorial comments, of which the following from the *Syracuse Standard*, dated August 30th, 1879, is a fair sample:

"The announcement, yesterday morning, of J. H. Noyes, the head and front of Oneida Community's thirty years offending, was a complete surprise to the entire Christian community of central New York. More than that, it was a most astonishing announcement! A most unexpected and entirely unlooked-for concession! A most graceful and entirely Christian method of putting to utter rout one's enemies by the inexpensive method of simply writing, as they used to do in the late war—'We have met the enemy and we are theirs!' And yet the more one thinks over the graceful and Christian concession the Community has made, the more it is apparent that the victory is not all on the side of the enemy after all.

"The Community has now placed itself fairly and squarely on the ground of suffering themselves in a so-called just cause, rather than permit the enemies of that cause to be afflicted. It is the Apostle Paul's argument over again: 'If meat makes thy brother to offend, eat no meat.'

"In this concession J. H. Noyes and his followers stamp themselves more than ordinarily wise, more than ordinarily imbued with a Chris-

tian spirit, and as far-seeing as their most zealous and sagacious opponents."

It should be observed that the above message proposes a temporary concession, not a retraction.

J. H. Noyes distinctly defines his position. He proposed that "we give up the practice of complex marriage, *not as renouncing belief in the principles and finality of that institution*, but in deference to public sentiment," etc.; showing that the concession was simply a matter of expediency, a proposal to hold the objectionable practice of complex marriage in abeyance until the objections had been removed by a change in public sentiment.

Any permanent retraction of complex marriage would have been inconsistent with that fundamental principle of the Community which constituted its essence as the "kingdom of heaven upon earth." If complex marriage was wrong in 1879, it was equally wrong thirty or forty years previously. **It proved to be a superlative and unquestionable success,** and if it was right, neither Mr Noyes nor the Community had any right to renounce it; all they could do was what they did, agree to abstain from it for a season on the ground of expediency. On more than one occasion previously, in the presence of sickness in the family or of persecution or other causes,

John H. Noyes proposed that the Community as a body consider itself under criticism, and proclaim a fast from conjugal freedom; making a time of earnest self-examination and spiritual improvement, and proving their power of self-control in refraining from, as well as in using, their freedom. Such seasons of fasting sometimes lasted a few days or six months, and they were strictly observed by all. Their right to exercise freedom as a principle was no more abandoned in the public suspension of complex marriage than it was in their former more private experiences of temporary suspension. It was rather an assertion of their right, either to use their freedom or to yield to expediency; they elected to yield until such time as they deemed it expedient to do otherwise. At the same time, they had pledged themselves to the public, and having assumed that pledge, of course considered themselves bound to observe their promise until they were prepared to renounce it as publicly as they had professed it.

Mr Noyes says that he does not consider "our present social arrangements an essential part of our profession as Christian communists." He does not say that it is not an essential feature in practical communism. As a question of consistency, it was not essential to their profession or confession of faith, and as a question of social

economy, it was not of vital importance to those who knew both "how to be abased and how to abound." But for the training of the young and the uninitiated, complex marriage and criticism were of such vital importance that, no matter how voluntarily such freedom may be suspended for a time among the more spiritually developed members, it would be impossible to perpetuate real communism of heart without it.

Criticism, which was the bulwark against the influx of selfishness, would become unavailable with the introduction of worldly marriage, for the wife would no longer feel free to criticise her husband publicly, nor would she tolerate his being criticised by others. The difficulties of the changed conditions may be enlarged upon almost indefinitely; suffice it to say, that criticism must die when worldly marriage begins, and that it ceased under the changed conditions of the Oneida Community.

No one realised these consequences more fully than John H. Noyes, but it was wiser and better in every way to anticipate the issue as he did than to wait and be compelled to act under pressure and in a panic, instead of in the comparatively quiet self-possessed manner in which the members transformed themselves from a community into a limited joint stock company.

There is no law under which the Oneida Com-

munity would have been interfered with, so they were safe from any action under existing statutes; but the Presbyterian Church, led on by Professor Mears of Hamilton College, who for years had been an unswerving foe to the Community, had organised a movement, with Bishop Huntington at its head, to obtain special legislation against them at Albany.

If Mears had succeeded, it is impossible to conjecture how a band of unprincipled lawyers and politicians might have robbed the members, nor to what extent ruin and hardship might have been entailed upon the aged and children of the Community.

It was the leader's duty, therefore, to protect them in the best way that he could. Complications had arisen within the Community that rendered the task more difficult, but he completely disarmed the opposition from without by a graceful concession to public prejudice, and then prepared himself for consideration of the best plans that could be devised for the successful winding-up of the communistic experiment,—a winding-up which, in the very nature of things, had become inevitable.

So well informed a man as the editor of the *Syracuse Standard* was so thoroughly conversant with the subject of which he wrote that he must have been well aware of the logical deductions

to which his words so directly pointed. He says:

"In this concession, J. H. Noyes and his followers stamp themselves more than ordinarily wise, more than ordinarily imbued with a Christian spirit, and as far-seeing as their most zealous and sagacious opponents."

Character, above all things, is a question of slow development, and is moulded by environments, so that if complex marriage had been an unvirtuous system it could not possibly have exerted such a moral influence over its disciples; but after thirty or more years they had developed more than ordinary wisdom, a more Christian spirit than had ordinary Christendom, which had been under the moral influence of worldly marriage for upwards of two thousand years.

If the effect of complex marriage had been to develop a superior class of people, and not only the *Syracuse Standard* and its contemporaries but all who knew them, admitted the superiority of the communists over other people in honesty, sobriety, square-dealing, unselfishness, and all other traits that can be summed up in the character of a good citizen, Professor Mears and his coterie simply stultified themselves in their diatribes against it, for the standard proclaimed by Him whom they pretended to follow was, "By their fruits shall ye know them."

The fruition of Professor Mears' theology was blindness to everything that was good in a system that had been productive of nothing but good.

Following the Christian formulæ, the only logical conclusion is that an unvirtuous system could not have developed so good a class of people, and that so good a people could not have inaugurated an immoral system.

CHAPTER IV

"Purity of purpose among the Perfectionists."

It has been a popular fallacy that they who formed the Oneida Community were actuated by a desire for sexual freedom; but that is only the phantasy of a licentious imagination. It has no foundation in fact, and is farthest from being true. Indeed, it would have been almost impossible for anyone impelled by such motives to get by the ordeal of criticism. No one gained admission with such motives except in rare instances, when strong efforts had been made to induce the Community to relent. **In every instance all recognised, when too late, that a mistake had been made in not acceding to Mr Noyes' first impressions,** and the best means that circumstances afforded were adopted to correct the error.

While such stringent precautions were provided against the admission of selfish pleasure-seekers from outside, there was no less watchfulness against the development of a similar spirit from within. People who attribute to John H. Noyes and to the leading spirits in the Community anything but the most exalted and purest motives in dealing with or participating in the conjugal

freedom which formed so prominent a feature of the community life, vastly underestimate the difficulties of dealing with so complex a question, and do not stop to consider that any violation of principle on the part of the leaders would be in direct opposition to the spirit they were seeking to promote, and to which they had devoted their lives. Nothing but the most profound sense of duty could have attracted such earnest people as the original members were, out of straight-laced New England propriety into the system of the Oneida Community, and nothing less than the most earnest desire to elevate themselves and others could have kept them from falling into temptation that their traducers know full well they would be powerless to withstand.

The public verdict is ever rendered in advance of testimony against innovators on established customs; and it cannot be other than adverse in social matters so long as the proclivity of men is to debase rather than to elevate their sexual natures, and to look down on women, although the latter are, on an average, far superior to most men in the refinement of their thoughts and spiritual nature.

That men are debased in this particular is evidenced in the fact that the entire fabric of social ethics has been reared by urgent necessity as a barrier against their depredations upon the

rights of the opposite sex; and that it is still insufficient protection is added evidence of their sexual degradation.

It could not be expected that other than the worst construction would be put upon the actions of such reformers as John H. Noyes; it will, therefore, be unnecessary to refute the ridiculous stories that found currency among the fast men of the day.

In Mr Gladstone's earlier parliamentary career, about the time of his first premiership, he was made a target for all the filth that his traducers could conjure out of their foul imaginations.

Sittings of the House being at night, it was often early dawn when Mr Gladstone wended his way through comparatively deserted streets toward his home. For reasons of his own, he preferred walking. One might reasonably suppose that so simple a preference was entirely within his personal jurisdiction, but Mr Grundy thought otherwise; he must have some ulterior motives, so he was watched. It was found that he stopped and talked with "fallen women"; not once or twice, but frequently, and that he handed them something in writing. That this latter was an appointment, was taken for granted.

The country was filled with the idle rumours.

Nobody asked for proofs. The proof was there; he consorted with prostitutes in the public streets; what more could be said? Opposition papers opened their columns to the evil innuendoes. Even Exeter Hall affected to be scandalised, and Mr Grundy fairly howled with holy anguish. Months rolled on, but Mr Gladstone was silent as the Sphinx. That was regarded as still more positive proof of his guilt. When so much smoke had suggested in high quarters the existence of some fire, and Mr Gladstone considered it his duty to speak, he privately explained that Mrs Gladstone had established a Magdalene Home and that he rarely missed an opportunity of inviting those to avail themselves of his wife's benevolence, for whose benefit she had built the institution. It was entirely a private matter, and was kept as secret as possible out of deference to the sensibilities of the class they wished to benefit.

This affords a fair sample of the folly of impure minds daring to judge the actions of pure men.

The name of Magdalene suggests what would undoubtedly have been the conclusions drawn from Christ's conduct in connection with her had he lived in this day. In that day, "John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking and they said he hath a devil. The Son of

Man came eating and drinking and they said, behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." John H. Noyes could not expect to fare better at the hands of a scurrilous public than did Christ and other reformers.

It will be manifestly unjust to condemn the actions of a man while in ignorance of his motives, especially when all his previous actions have been consistent with his highest professions. To believe that Mr Noyes was guilty of sin, the public is asked to ignore his past history and to jump at the preposterous conclusion that the glorious home of the communist with its happy surroundings comprising a family, the joy of which was depicted in every face, and where love bubbled as a fountain from every heart; that such a gathering of harmonious souls was not the growth of forty years of self-denial and earnest seeking for a higher life, but was the natural outcome of selfishness; and that the noble women who for so many years strove, with a devotion that was sublime, to free their fellow-women from bondage to society, and from the slavery engendered by a false ethical standard, were not what they professed to be, but were pleasure-seekers obeying a leader whose chief object in living was in diametrical opposition to conscience.

There is no middle course in this matter. Either John H. Noyes was a heroically good man or he was a diabolically bad one, and the Oneida Community was either a heaven of purity and bliss or it was a hell of wickedness and hypocrisy. They who look below the surface of idle gossip will hesitate before stultifying themselves by belief in such extravagant inconsistencies. The extraordinary incompatibility of things should be a sufficient answer to such misstatements, but there are many wrong-headed people to whom it is impossible to think rightly about some subjects, and most notably conjugal matters, so long as there is the smallest loop-hole for a misconception. Such a state of mind is a misfortune. It cannot be helped. Inherited bias cannot be overcome without an effort, any easier than can any other feature of heredity.

Perversion in reference to everything connected with the relation of man and woman has prevailed through so many generations that the bias is easily perpetuated by social surroundings and current ethics. Thinking people will do well to take this into consideration, and discredit every story relating to the subject so long as there remain any signs of inconsistency in regard to it, for the first report and the most popular will more frequently turn out to be least reliable.

It will be a simple matter to state the attitude of John H. Noyes and others to the conjugal relation in a way to account for the perversion of his purest motives by those who were looking for evil, and to repel every possible accusation of sin.

In the earlier experiences of the Community the members had nearly all become regenerate, *i.e.*, they had turned away from the fashion of a world of selfishness and, setting "their affections on things above" had embarked upon an enterprise in search of truth, determined to follow wherever it led. Long and arduous as was the process of leading these devoted followers out of the prejudices of New England Puritanism and the orthodoxy of their forefathers, their leader had the advantage of appealing to men and women of mature judgment who were amenable to sound reasoning, and had the courage to follow the truth to its logical deductions. It was easier to deal with them than with the second generation who were growing up in the family without any of that spiritual awakening which precedes regeneration or is the concomitant of that radical change in nature. They were the children who had been born outside, in the usual haphazard way, and had not been the subject of any attention to stirpiculture or to post-natal conditions, other than falls to the chances of other children in

the lottery of life. They were brought into the Community as the natural dependents of their parents, without any more choice in the matter than had been accorded to them in being brought into the world. These children of various ages had little experience in past life and no faith in a future on which to build. They could only be approached on their own plane of thought, and to this task the leaders of the Community addressed themselves. The greatest dangers to the young arise out of ignorance of their sexual natures; and the social ethics of the day, with false modesty and prudery, tend not only to perpetuate but to intensify this ignorance. At the age of puberty all children, in a greater or less degree, develop curiosity in reference to sexual matters, and this leads them to canvass the subject among themselves. By this means, they imbibe false and ofttimes fatal ideas leading to self-abuse and early degradation. More frequently the most filthy notions are handed down by older children or by brothers and sisters who have had no better means of learning the most important things of life than they had.

The sexual nature of man, in its lowest aspect, is animal; under the refining influences of love it comes under the sway of emotion, and emotion leads up to, and helps to develop the spiritual nature. That is the natural course of evolution

from the animal nature up to regeneration. John H. Noyes knew that by surrounding these young people with puritanical teachings and prohibitions he would inevitably alienate any affection they might have for their Community home, and he would lose all his hopes in the rising generation. Radical as he was and original in all his thoughts, with the courage of his conviction he reverently and pure-mindedly studied the lives and experiences of these young folk. He encouraged them to confide in the older people as better fitted to advise them than were the younger and less experienced. He taught them that there was nothing unclean about their sexual organs, and nothing sinful in their sexual desires. They all looked up to "Father Noyes," to whom in this parental relation no child's trouble was too trivial, no sorrow too simple to engage his heartiest sympathy.

Their love affairs, their disappointments, their jealousies, their successes, and their failures were alike met in the same simple spirit that counselled and criticised and at the same time soothed, and started them the stronger on the journey of life.

The girls were taught that, as their first impressions of sexual experience were naturally the more momentous it was of the greater importance that they should receive those impressions

through those members who would be more likely to elevate them with the consciousness of having innocently exercised a pure and natural function on the spiritual plane, than ~~would~~ through men to whom self-gratification would be a greater temptation; and that it was important that the more mature should give instruction in this particular before the young were allowed a freedom among themselves that they might otherwise unwittingly abuse. This was simply an amplification of the "ascending fellowship" which meant that all would find more edification and means of improvement in associating with their superiors than they would in dropping down to the level of those who were less progressed.

John H. Noyes usually adopted the means nearest at hand for accomplishing his purpose, and his purpose always was to help others; if his methods did not suit the ideas of those who were looking for evil, it is by no means the case that he was wrong. It always turned out that his treatment was exactly adapted to the case in hand. If he elevated a coarse nature, it in no way detracted from the refinement of his own spirit, but rather was proof of the strength of a spirit that could afford to "stoop to conquer."

It was considered the best and the most legitimate mode of education for those who were

most spiritual to approach the less spiritual and lift them up. This succeeded admirably with the second generation. Only a few of the older ones, who had been longer in contact with the world and therefore were not sufficiently unselfish withdrew, but the majority remained to grace a home the like of which has not been seen since the world began. They were educated at home and graduated in the public colleges. A few of that class were dissatisfied, and remained as a sort of undercurrent of discontent, which easily broke out into rebellious expressions when the restraining influence of the most altruistic was no longer felt.

Many of the girls became experts in shorthand and type-setting, they could write for the paper, cook for the family, or practice dentistry. Some of them were excellent musicians, one studied under a New York professor and developed a voice that would have been an acquisition to the operatic stage.

The young men organised a brass band and a stringed orchestra which discoursed music of classic order, while some attained great proficiency as soloists. Nothing was wanted to complete the harmonious blending of the second generation with the genius of the Community, and to endorse Mr Noyes' mode of training them with the stamp of supreme success.

Precisely the same policy was followed with the third generation, and so far as the majority were concerned, it was attended with no less success; but an element of disintegration had crept in, and the minds of a few became poisoned by the influence of this element. Factions were formed against those who had spent their lives and their fortunes in freeing the Community from the spirit of those who were interfering and who were incapable of appreciating its higher life or the rationale of a regime that had developed a class of young men and women who, in all that is pure, refined and ennobling, are unequalled by any group of the same number in the wide world.

CHAPTER V

"*Internal Life of the Oneida Community.*"

CRITICISM was to the Community what ballast is to a ship. To the individuals it was as fire is to gold. Unless a man is very earnest in the desire for improvement of character, any investigation of his inner life, either by himself or others, is so extremely distasteful that the ordeal of receiving a faithful criticism so as to profit by it is a crucial test of sincerity. On the other hand, as people are so extremely sensitive in this particular, the ability to impart criticism in that spirit which provokes love and not wrath, healing the wound it makes, is a spiritual achievement scarcely equalled by the power of appropriating it.

It seems strange that so many visitors should find pleasure in admiring the Community, its grounds, its home, and its people, and not one of them care for the interior life of which the external comforts were only an expression. People came from all parts of the world to see for themselves what this Kingdom of Heaven was like. Hundreds of visitors in a single day have been entertained by the communists. Sometimes the rush has been so great that the in-

dustries of the Community had to be suspended to take care of visitors. The latter roamed at will over all the grounds, the workshops and the dwelling-houses, and took possession of the music hall or concert room. Such a crowd required the presence of many to act as a police force, besides more to attend to the wants of the people. Imagine a country place having to feed from 100 to 1000 people with little or no warning, and some idea can be formed of the work it entailed on the visiting department. The people had to be fed, amused, watched, and entertained. Concerts had to be improvised, sometimes private theatricals were given, but always the crowd was good-natured and intensely pleased with the efforts put forth for their entertainment. All who toiled in catering to their demands felt that they were preaching the gospel of Christ—by allowing the life of happiness and contentment in the Community to be investigated; but when the last train left, all hands went to work "with a will" to efface every trace of an uncleanly public. Scraps of paper, cigar stumps, nut shells, partially burned matches, litter of picnickers and other débris were all gathered up from the lawns and grounds. Floors were scrubbed and restored to their wonted state of immaculate cleanliness. Not a spot of tobacco juice remained in all the mansion to tell a tale of filthy invaders. Every-

thing was put in "apple pie order" ready for the defilement which was sure to be repeated on the following day; but for the nonce, peace and purity prevailed within the Community borders as completely as though they had never been desecrated. Such work was by no means irksome, because, like all of the extra work in the Community, it was carried on by "Bees," all the family joining in with enthusiasm and accomplishing in a few minutes what would ordinarily occupy hours. The day's work done, with sighs of relief all sought renewing of life by drawing together in the evening meeting where, with all hearts beating in unison, there was such an outpouring of power for all, that can only be imagined by those who went in, tired physically and spiritually, and came out refreshed and rested. How little is known of what power a battery of true hearts is capable! The Community realised that there was a philosophy, little understood, in the saying of Christ: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst," and they were careful to keep up the tone of their meetings by individually keeping themselves open to criticism. After a rush of visitors, those who had been most exposed to contact with them usually offered themselves for criticism, that their spirits might be freed from contamination by worldly

influences. For the same reason, the travelling agents who were away on long trips would seek sustaining power from the heart of the family, by asking criticism before starting out. The loving words of many true friends lived in their memories and lifted them out of the world that they dealt with to the hearts of the loved ones who waited to welcome them home again. There a bath relieved them of the dust of travel and a criticism relieved them of any possible spiritual contamination, while open arms received them to the caresses of the truest hearts that ever throbbed with love to their fellow-beings. This round of leave-taking and loving welcome lightened the lives of the salesmen, and was a premium to those who could return with the cleanest record.

Tobacco was tabooed in the Community by unanimous consent. In earlier days all of the men used tobacco in one form or another, but probably not one of them commended the habit. Criticism soon brought out the fact that, while women enjoyed attention from the men, their pleasure was not enhanced by the odour of tobacco; flavour of tobacco in any form was not conducive to the magnetism of a kiss so long as there existed any repugnance to it. It was suggested that there was something incongruous in having communism in everything

else and excepting tobacco. If smoking was good, why exclude women from its benefits? Such an alternative was not to be tolerated; the logic was too apparent, so tobacco was banished.

Stimulating by drinking, or eating highly seasoned food, was avoided as being abnormal and unnecessary. The people were practically vegetarians; meat was served occasionally, but not so frequently as to form a part of their diet. It was considered that the use of meat tended to develop coarser rather than more refined tissue, and as a necessary consequence, life of a coarser grain.

Osculation was not so common a mode of salutation as it is in ordinary society; nor was shaking of hands so universally practised in the Community. Where a number of people were busily engaged in the various duties imposed upon them by a daily rush of self-invited visitors who were exacting in their demands for attention, there was little time to spare in recognitions that were unnecessary and at such times may be undesired by one or other of the parties. Good taste and criticism regulated this as it did other things in the daily experiences too numerous to particularise.

Kissing and hand-shaking meant something

more to Oneida Communists than empty compliment. Hand and heart went together, and magnetism of a quality not to be lightly dispensed was transmitted in a community kiss. If any were too obtuse to see when such recognition was inopportune they would be likely to be enlightened by their friends during some meeting for criticism.

The objection of the communists to kissing in public was that visitors were ever on the watch for a peg on which to hang some silly idea of the social life, or to match some old-time scandalous story, so that such a mode of recognition was sometimes embarrassing to the women, for whom the men had too much consideration than to subject them to the scrutiny of an evil eye; public opinion in the family therefore disfavoured it.

The absurdity of the habit or fashion of an unmeaning, indiscriminate kissing is shown in the European style of presenting a cheek to receive the unappreciated kiss, while instances of its incongruity with the customs of these days of steam and lightning are in frequent evidence; *e.g.*, a conductor whose situation on his electric car depends upon his "making time" yells out, "come ladies, step lively," while they insist upon kissing, and each having "the last word," to the disgust of impatient passengers whose

anger asserts itself in unsentimental grumbling, and the ladies dilate audibly upon the rudeness of those "horrid conductors." This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of a kiss. But where trains are despatched on the moment, and trolley cars are running only one block apart, such hindrances so interfere with travel that efforts are made to obtain legislation against kissing in public places. The absurdity is only surpassed by the folly of such a whirl of excitement as competition fastens upon the people, allowing them scant time to use the necessaries of life for which they scramble, and none for the interchange of those loving sentiments without which life is not worth the living. *The practice of the Oneida Community of confining expression of affection to appropriate occasions was forced upon them by contact with the uncongenial world, wherein they were constrained to consider expediency rather than spontaniety in their interchanges of affectionate greetings.*

Criticism was not only a barrier to the approach of unworthy people from without, it was equally a bar to the development of evil influences within. This unique ordinance was not altogether an original idea. It was an adaptation, as will be seen by the following extract from "John H. Noyes's Religious Ex-

perience," referring to a time when he was about twenty-one years of age :

"In consequence of my decision to become a missionary, my connection with the missionary brethren became more intimate, and I was admitted to a select society which has existed among them since the days of Newell, Fisk, etc. Among those with whom I was thus associated, I remember Lyman and Munson, who were killed by the cannibals some years ago, on one of the islands in the East Indies ; Tracy, who I suppose is now in China ; Justin Perkins, the Nestorian missionary and champion, who went to Africa but subsequently returned and died. One of the weekly exercises of this society was a frank criticism of each other's character for the purpose of improvement. The mode of proceeding was this : At each meeting, the member whose turn was, according to the alphabetical order of his name, to submit to criticism, held his peace, while the other members one by one told him his faults in the plainest way possible. This exercise sometimes cruelly crucified self-complacency, but it was contrary to the regulations of the society for anyone to be provoked or to complain. I found much benefit in submitting to this ordeal, both while I was at Andover and afterward."

From this it will be seen that a number of

young men adopted criticism as a means of improvement, and that it will be no more difficult for any other people, young or old, to submit to the same ordeal, provided they have the same desire to improve. So long as people are without that desire, it is difficult to find a completely satisfactory place for them. Certainly it could not be in the Oneida Community. It might be irksome to young people until they had learned to profit by it, as all discipline is at first, but when they had formed habits in harmony with their means of improvement they learned to love the means by which they had progressed, and to rejoice in the results of sufferings that were incident only to their inexperience.

One applicant for membership, who had been accustomed to the etiquette of society and the nice compliments with which people of that class are wont to entertain each other, tried to give some account of his sensations during his first criticism, but he had to acknowledge that he could not do so adequately. In his own words: "Here was I who had been doing my utmost to lead a right kind of life; had been a labourer in churches, in religious meetings, in Sunday and Ragged Schools; had always stood ready to empty my pockets to the needy, and more than anybody else had been instrumental in improving the New York Y.M.C.A.—I, who for months

had been shaping my conduct and ideas into form, as I thought, to match the requirements of the Oneida Community, was shaken from centre to circumference. Every trait of my character that I took any pride or comfort in seemed to be cruelly discounted; and after, as it were, being turned inside out and thoroughly inspected, I was, metaphorically, stood upon my head, and allowed to drain till all the self-righteousness had dripped out of me. John H. Noyes wound up the criticism, and said many kind things. I don't know what they were. Perhaps it was only the way in which he said them. Perhaps it was only his personal magnetism or the magnetism of the spirit which he represented. But there was not a word or a thought of retort left in me. I felt like pouring out my soul in tears, but there was too much pride left in me yet to make an exhibition of myself. The work had only been begun. For days and weeks after I found myself recalling various passages of my criticism and reviewing them in a new light; the more I pondered, the more convinced I became of the justice of what at first my spirit had so violently rebelled against. In my subsequent experience with criticism I have invariably found that, in points wherein I thought myself the most abused, I have, on more mature reflection, found the deepest truth.

To-day I feel that I would gladly give many years of my life if I could have just one more criticism from John H. Noyes." [1]

"I was admitted to probation with the understanding that I should be considered as one of the family, so far as the meetings were concerned and the liberty of the house and grounds that every necessity would be provided for, but that no claim would accrue for services, and that no such claim must be made, nor might any advances be made of a sexual character, until such time as the Community deemed it expedient to admit me to full membership.

"With all of this I cheerfully complied, and started probationary membership as a cook. I had been a lawyer in the other world; I was not here for style, but to be useful, and I had no doubt that I should drift to my appropriate destination. In the course of years I was cook, baker, farm-hand, shop-hand, laundryman, fruit-hand, book-keeper, stoker, pipe-fitter, lamp-cleaner, proof-reader, editor, and it is hard to remember what I did not do. No form of industry was considered degrading in the Community; on the contrary, it was a privilege to be allowed to

[1] It might almost be said that he (John H. Noyes) was the sum and essence of all there was good in the Oneida Community. Every man and woman in the Community is his hopeless debtor. The secret of his character was a consuming love-sick passion for Christ.—F.

help in any capacity in so noble a cause. When I was a stoker, an Episcopalian minister had charge of the earth closets, and we used to laugh over the incongruity of our early studies and training with such occupations. We never thought of complaining about our circumstances; it was a huge joke, and we enjoyed it immensely. My circumstances and outside business entanglements were such that I was not in a position to fully join the Community for over five years, and during all that time I was only a probationary member. Did I get discontented or unhappy? No. My peace was 'like a river.' Everybody loved me and I loved everybody. Of course a man could not live so long in such a free environment without being tempted to let his heart cling to one or other of the lovely women with whom he might be in intimate industrial relations; but I knew that it would not be honourable to give way to this temptation, and if I found myself getting out of depth, would ask for that criticism which never failed to right matters.

"Mrs Harriett A. Noyes, the wife of John H. Noyes, who was known as Mother Noyes, was my dear confidant and counsellor. Never had I known such a kind lady before. It was a tower of strength to be in her presence.

"It is a commentary on the purity of the Oneida Community that a strong healthy man

in the prime of life could live five years in their midst and get such reinforcement of his spiritual nature from their environment that he never once yielded to temptation in any way that involved a breach of the confidence reposed in him. Moreover, after being admitted to the family relation, young women and girls, whose lovely forms would be a grace to any artist's studio, have been associated with me in a domestic intimacy unparalleled in the outside world, but toward whom I allowed myself no liberty, and with whom I have not, before or since, exchanged so much familiarity as a kiss.

"Few men, perhaps, and not all women will believe this statement. It only shows how utterly incapable worldly-minded men must necessarily be of forming any conception of what the strength and the power of the Community life in its halcyon days was to those who could absorb it and appreciate it in their daily lives and experiences.

"Jealousy I never knew. It was contrary to the Community spirit. It would be little less than a miracle if I had not been in love. One experience will show right-minded readers that there is purity in all expressions of love, and that its expressions in the Oneida Community were of the purest type.

"In my earliest connection with the Community,

I was struck with the charming spirit of a young girl—so different from the young women of the world. In all her words and ways she was refined. Her simple candour and freedom showed her to be a child of nature, but no subject seemed foreign to her mind. In her simplicity she appeared to be entirely unconscious of her personal charms, and delighted in the accomplishments of others. The more I saw of her, the more I found in her to admire, and I was in love before I realised whither I was drifting. My first impulse was to seek Mother Noyes and make a full confession of it. The kind lady smiled, and said she was not surprised, for no one could help loving so good a girl;[1] that I need not allow myself to come under any condemnation on account of it. She advised me to avoid, as much as possible, any expression of my love that would cause the girl to put a restraint upon herself, and that consequently would be distressing to both of us, but to go on as if nothing had happened, looking within for grace and strength to enable me to keep good faith with the Community, and with my own conscience, and in God's good time I should surely find a rich reward.

[1] "The normal man," as Mr J. H. Noyes said, "loves the normal woman." That exclusiveness and fastidiousness of affection which are the presuppositions of all conventional romance are abnormalities, and fatal to—not constitutive of—the highest type of romantic love.

"I loved on in silence for years, with the gratification of knowing that in not a single instance had my conduct toward her been such as to evoke criticism, or, so far as I knew, to cause her even momentary sorrow. It became a means of strength to me, rather than of weakness.

"If the object of my affection found pleasure in the society of other men, it made me happy[1] to think that she was free, and that no act of mine had been the means of placing impediments in her way.

"After I became a full member, I still refrained from intruding myself upon her notice. Naturally, our relations became more intimate, but I avoided any avowal of special love that, if reciprocated, would estrange her from the central love in the Community, and that, if rejected, could not be other than distressing to us both."

"Yet, with a prayer in my heart for her, I was overwhelmed with the consciousness that one whom I had loved so long and tenderly could repose such confidence in my loyalty to truth that in the simplicity of her nature she did not hesitate to approach me in the charmingly spontaneous way that was natural to her.

[1] There is much less masculine jealousy in the outside world than *appears*. It is to a large extent *simulated* in deference to a diabolical code of miscalled "honour."

× Special love was rejected: see p. 90.

"I realised the truth of Mother Noyes' kindly words, 'In God's own good time, you will surely find a rich reward.' In those fleeting moments, I experienced the crowning glory of my love, and was satisfied to wait until, meeting in some future sphere, our love shall renew expression, not with greater purity, nor a whit more sacred.

"If this simple narration of an episode in a sacred love should fall under the eye of her who is the heroine, I plead the sanctity of my purpose in relating it, and ask her forgiveness for doing so.

"It has been to me too precious for utterance, and its sanctity would not be now invaded for any purpose of less importance than to prove to those who may be susceptible to proof that the relation of the sexes advocated by John H. Noyes was not less pure than the intercourse of angels."

From past experiences of humanity on the lower of the two planes of conjugal love, it was natural to suppose that when a man and woman had united for the sacred end of producing a child, they would come into such relations with each other as to create a desire to make the connection an exclusive one—in other words, to assume a *proprietary* relationship of man and wife, and, so far as they were concerned, obliterate communism in their domestic life.

The thought is so plausible that it easily gained credence with critics of communism and was given to the public by a distinguished ethnologist as the true cause of the decline and disbandment of the Oneida Community.

Now the fact is that no such desire was engendered to a fatal extent by stirpicultural unions, and the alleged cause *had absolutely nothing to do* with the dissolution of the society.

A member of the Community describes an event in his own experience which will illustrate how masculine jealousy, the great blot on the monogamic and polygamic marriage systems, was dominated among the Perfectionists by the law of love. It is here given to show how incapable the selfish mind is of approximating to any conception of the heavenly affection under the sway of which Mr Noyes' disciples lived.

"Charles C—— was a young man of great ability and singularly noble character. He was deeply in love with Miss B——, who was about of his own age, and who, like himself, had been brought to the Community in early childhood; being a young man of ardent temperament, his affectionate nature led him into such relations with the object of his love that frequent criticism was necessary to strengthen him against temptations that might militate against his loyalty

to Christ. This love was reciprocal, and was so intense that it could not be easily made subordinate to the highest allegiance of all.

"The Community, always solicitous to discourage selfishness in conjugal intercourse as in all other departments of life, when Charles C—— and Miss B—— had both been welcomed as candidates for parenthood, deemed it prudent that she should become a mother by some husband of her choice, and that Charles C—— should choose some other sweetheart to woo for the purpose of maternity.

"Not only temperament, but tendencies that were in any way objectionable, were recognised as being undesirable qualities to intensify by the uniting of two parents having the trait in common. Both Charles C—— and Miss B—— having been under criticism for a tendency to drift into exclusive relations in such manner as to jeopardise communistic love, it was found wrong to place them in conditions of stronger temptation; so the moral interests outweighed those of exclusive affection. This may have been a trial for Charles C——, but *he never harboured a jealous thought of the man who was united to the same woman; on the contrary, their common love was a bond of union, and after the child was born he loved it as tenderly and cared for it as devotedly as if it were his*

own. Miss B—— had been an object of admiration not only to Charles C—— but to many of us. She was a young lady of great beauty. Her easy grace, her kind disposition and fine accomplishments made her very much beloved in the family. Motherhood ripened her into a most charming woman, and my friendship gradually grew into courtship.

"Although Charles C—— was aware of my affection for Miss B——, he was so far from evincing the least resentment that our relations continued to be those of the most heartfelt friendship.

"Not having been reared among the Perfectionists, I was not sufficiently imbued with their spirit to understand fully their utter unselfishness in love; I was, therefore, unprepared to credit Charles C—— with the full measure of his noble nature; consequently, when visiting Miss B——, whose room was on the same corridor with Charles C——, I was conscious of wishing to avoid observation while passing his door, and if Charles C—— appeared when I was in company with Miss B—— I invariably withdrew. In later years I learned that my consideration caused the pain I had sought to avoid, for Charles C—— felt grieved that his relations with Miss B—— should be so construed as to curtail our freedom on his account.

"One evening, when I was in Miss B——'s room, her child was so fretful that our efforts failed to soothe it. The door opened and Charles C——, taking the child from its crib so quietly that we were scarcely aware of his presence, carried it into his own room. Not a word was spoken; but this action, trifling in itself, was to me a revelation of such nobility of character as I had scarcely supposed possible. His solicitude lest our courtship be interrupted, his manly, yet delicate way of acting on so generous an impulse, made an impression on my heart that can never be effaced. I was covered with shame at having even harboured a doubt as to the unselfishness of his love. It is needless to add that we were even firmer friends from that time forward."

The question that will arise in every mind will be, what was it that made men in the Oneida Community so diametrically opposite to ordinary men in relation to the love of the opposite sex? It seems to be very easy to those who have lived in that experience, but a very difficult question to solve to the satisfaction of those who know so little of the higher law of love as do the subjects of non-communistic marriage.

The previous question is: What made the Oneida Community different from ordinary society? The Perfectionists had consecrated their lives to the highest truth that could be

lived in this world, and they derived the greatest known pleasure from realising their ideal.

In ordinary society, worldly people devote their lives to getting as much comfort and happiness as they can in life by looking out for their own selfish interests first, and protecting themselves in what they deem their personal rights against every encroachment by friend or foe, if necessary with bowie knife and revolver. This is especially true, indeed almost inevitable, in conjugal matters, wherein men's honour is assumed to require them to love their wives or their sweethearts in such a spirit of imperious monopoly that they shall be ready to subject them to any indignities, or to death, if they suspect them of dividing their affections, and society stands ready to condone the crime.

The ideals of the two forms of marriage being exactly the reverse of each other with respect to the exclusiveness of the union, the characteristics of those concerned must be as diametrically opposed in this respect as are their ideals. If a man has learned to form his ideal on the plane of selfishness, he will necessarily be in a greater or less degree the victim of jealousies, and his love will partake of the nature of a lower life, with modes of expression that obtain among brutes without the restraining influences that pertain to brute instinct. But if he is so fortunate as to

have been trained under the refining influences of complex marriage, the essence of which is unselfishness, his nature will surely be changed into the image of that he gazes upon, and his chief pleasure will be in contributing primarily to the happiness of others. Of course life will approximate to the ideal in proportion to the earnestness of desire to obtain it. Hence, the condition that is lacking in common society to elevate the sentiment of love is a higher ideal of love, with integrity of purpose to attain it. The secret of the Oneida Community's conjugal success for the period of an entire generation, was their high ideal and earnestness in seeking it.

CHAPTER VI

"Spiritual Development the Solution of Sexual Problems."

It is needless to dilate upon the inadaptation of monogamic marriage to the requirements of the people, because current events are continually proving it, and the daily press and divorce courts are continually confirming the impression that some better social system is possible. Nor is it necessary to argue the question to convince thinking people that any system which mitigates the miseries of matrimony by according to woman the control of her own body, with some right in limiting the number of her offspring and determining their paternity, must be an improvement on the degrading influence which marriage brings to millions of people.

The average mind has settled that this subject is unsettled, and every day furnishes fresh proof of its increasing agitation. The question is not whether the existing social system needs reform, but the problem is, how to improve it. The Oneida Community demonstrated one method by which this object could be attained, therefore their theories and practices in regard to it are of intense interest to all social re-

formers as well as to those whose experience in social life has not been satisfactory.

Early in the history of what the communists called complex marriage, public attention was attracted to the free love movement, which started among a number of irresponsible pleasure-seekers, who attained such an unenviable reputation for licentiousness that John H. Noyes "set his face as a flint" against them, and was most careful not only to repudiate all of their practices, but to avoid any affiliation whatever with them or with any one who had been mixed up with them. Notwithstanding the most careful precautions, it proved to be impossible to evade the bad reputation that had been gained by free lovers, so that the term "free love" as applied to the Oneida Community, despite their persistent repudiations of licentious free love, carried with it the unsavoury odour that licentiousness had laden it with.

The communists did not in later days call themselves "free lovers"; the people of Central New York had been accustomed to the name, and they fastened it on to the Oneida Community without stopping to consider the fitness of the term. The communists were at first called Perfectionists because they professed to be a people who had been saved from sinning, and as this was their fundamental doctrine the name was the more appro-

priate. Their idea of forming a family wherein should be developed the environments of the kingdom of heaven was, of course, incompatible with sinning. All sin in the world results from selfishness, and in so far as love excludes selfishness it necessarily excludes sin, as "love is the fulfilling of the law." Therefore if they developed love, "salvation from sin" was the logical sequence, and "Perfectionists" was their appropriate title.

They could not proceed very far in the development of brotherly love without being confronted with the problem of sexual attractions. They met the problem at the start, and boldly sought its solution. Monogamic marriage as it existed in the world was out of the question in heavenly spheres, for such marriage is founded on selfishness, and the fundamental principle of the heavenly state is unselfishness.

The two things were so utterly opposed to each other that they could not be reconciled. The Perfectionists realised that they had either to give up marriage or their heavenly ideal. They unhesitatingly gave up marriage, placing themselves in the position of the Pentecostal Church, in which "they that had wives were as though they had none." Seeking to live up to the highest ideal of Christian life, the Perfectionists had progressed beyond the fashion of this world into

that of a higher plane, and it became of prime importance to determine what was the mode in the new life upon which they had entered. Taking their orders from Christ, they learned that communism was the heavenly way of living; that in a state of life in which ownership did not obtain, property rights of any kind could not be maintained. This disability implied that a man could no more own a wife than anything else, and suggested to the Jews the interrogation as to a woman who had been married seven times, whose wife should she be in the resurrection? Christ's answer, that "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels," confounded his cavillers; it helped the faithful Perfectionist, whose thoughts turned to the angels as denizens of the higher world that they were seeking to live in, and gave them a clue to the differences of fashion between men and angels.

It may be objected that one world at a time is enough; that it is fanaticism to pretend to be living in another sphere while existing in this; but the teaching of Christianity is that "the fashion of this world passeth away, it remaineth that they who have wives be as though they had none."

It is illogical to apply the teachings of Christ

to one department of life to the exclusion of others. If Christianity demands radical change in the heart and nature of the people, it necessitates corresponding change in their environments. Ethics of a world, the dominating influence of which is selfishness, cannot be adapted to the requirements and genius of a people whose ruling sentiment is the antithesis of selfishness. The Perfectionists would have experienced no difficulty with the varying requirements, so far as the original members were concerned, because they all had attained that change of nature implied in the term regeneration, and in so far as they were imbued with and governed by the higher law of love, there was no more possibility of their voluntarily infringing upon the rights and liberties of each other than of committing any sin from which they had been saved. They would have been justified by the spirit of love in placing themselves upon the broadest platform of free love, for they were controlled by that true love which "worketh no ill to his neighbour."

There were three questions to be considered before starting out on the angelic platform of free love, each one to be decided on the ground of expediency.

1st. Although the regenerated nature of parents would modify environments of offspring so as to accustom the young to be more receptive to

higher influences, yet they would have to learn by their experiences, as their parents had progressed before them, for it could not be expected that their changed characteristics would become hereditary in one or a few generations. Each must pass individually through the narrow portal of regeneration; therefore the first Perfectionists found it expedient to adopt some modification of the angelic mingling that in the elimination of selfishness would be a spiritual separation, and in the establishment of a new system of sexual intermingling would be a material departure from the fashion of the world, and at the same time contain within itself sufficient restraining influence to check any who may be tempted with selfishness. Their new system they called complex marriage.

2nd. Stirpiculture is such an important factor in the redemption of the world that the surest way of getting the right sort of people is to have them born right. Such a self-evident responsibility resting upon the Perfectionists to teach their fellow-men how to improve their race was so apparent, that herein arose another necessity for compromise between the angelic mode and the fashion of this world. Procreation of material bodies is necessarily confined to the material plane, and inasmuch as progression is the law of nature, it is the prerogative and the duty of all

concerned to propagate from the best to the exclusion of the worst. The reverse obtains in this age of perversions. Catholic priests who are supposed to be the most virtuous and the best educated and refined, are excluded from procreating, and the families of the most refined and of those whose means provide the best conditions for rearing and educating children are, from various causes, limited; while the poor, the ignorant, and the vicious breed like rabbits.

So long as the Perfectionists occupied a sort of neutral ground between the angelic and the mundane spheres, they could not ignore their responsibility to both, and must therefore discharge it as best they could. To this end they adopted complex marriage.

3rd. Love being the supreme sentiment governing everything in the higher life, the inhabitants of supernal spheres interpose no barriers to free interchange of the affections; becoming released from material environments, souls flow into each other according to their mutual attractions as in chemistry ingredients follow natural laws of blending.

Confession of Christ, continence, complex marriage and criticism,—this was the combination adopted by the Perfectionists to avoid the selfishness of monogamy and as a preparation for the exercise of that more complete freedom which

is the privilege of all who have been reborn into the dispensation of the gospel of love. They did not compromise any of their principles by compromising with the fashion of this world; they only limited their right *pro tem* rather than excite too strongly the prejudices of the unregenerate, and the better to train their own young until they were sufficiently matured to choose for themselves the better way.

This most remarkable departure from established custom constituted each male member of the family husband of all the females, and each female the wife of every man. Each man assumed the responsibility of affording the same loving care, consideration, and protection to each and every woman as he would to a wife under the monogamic system, and **so sacredly was this trust observed that during a period of over thirty years not a single instance occurred of recreancy to it.** A by no means unimportant feature of their system was, that a woman was entirely relieved from the undesired demands of a husband. She was left as absolutely free to accept or decline proposals from the opposite sex, as men are to make the advance. Moreover, it was not exclusively the province of man to take the initiative in love-making. Following the fashion of nature, it is sometimes better for many reasons that the first suggestion come from the female. In

all nature the female element invites and the male responds. From the pollen that falls in response to the suggestion from the appropriate pistil that conditions are prepared to retain it, to the animal, whether fish, flesh, or fowl, the same principle obtains, the female inviting the male by processes provided by nature too pronounced to be mistaken, too retiring to be obtrusive. There is every reason why this fashion of nature should be followed by conscious beings. Male importunity is rare in nature, as it would be among men if the right of the female to control her love affairs was acknowledged as a law of nature. There are thousands of ways more subtle than words by which women can express sentiment, and by means as far more refined as conscious man surpasses the lower animal in refinement, so that there is no danger of refined women doing violence to the sensibilities of men, nor of men so far mistaking their meaning as to incur any danger of a rebuff.

The subjection of woman during so many ages that the condition has become a second nature, is a phase of the question of "woman's rights" that requires the most careful consideration. Reliance on man has become a heredity, and reliance, leading to pusillanimity, slavery, fear, fawning, and flattery, constitutes a condi-

tion of things that a weak woman is unable to cope with, so that having given herself up to the dominant influence of a man she becomes a chattel. The fault is as much in her own wish for such submission as in the state of society that calls for it. Under such circumstances it will be impossible to make woman free until she has been educated out of the false sentiment to which ignorance and superstition have bound her. Her ambition must be aroused to become the mother of a future and a better race. She will then no longer be content to settle down into a chattel and a convenience. It is a mistaken conception of liberty to leave a woman who has been bred in ignorance of the vices of men to throw herself into the embrace of the first unscrupulous libertine whom she might mistake for an angel. On the same principle, it would be equally unjust for a young man, the victim of a sexual nature, stimulated into such abnormal cravings as to constitute a disease in the heredity of his race, to have a freedom that would only aggravate the disease. In either case, education is an absolute necessity, and as necessarily it must be more or less of a discipline; so that restriction in some form must precede freedom.

Education that would fit men and women to the exercise of freedom was the function of

criticism, and it took the Perfectionists out of the category of "free-lovers."

With the Perfectionists there was no possibility of drifting into the irresponsible right claimed by free-lovers to "love to-day and leave to-morrow." Each was responsible for the results of his acts, and not only so, but no man could approach a woman in any way to embarrass her. Men and women enjoyed their courtships in much the same way as lovers usually do, with the exception that special love in so far as it partook of a selfish, claiming attitude, was vetoed. If any man desired a special visit he was expected to give an invitation for that purpose, and he could do so only through the mediation of a third person, preferably some woman who was old enough to counsel and advise. This custom had something more than formality in it; the woman invited was thereby left entirely free either to accept or decline without the possible embarrassment of personally excusing herself; in fact, no excuse was necessary or asked for.

Where women were left free to accept or decline approaches from men, life became a state of continuous courtship, both seeking to attract each other by commending themselves to the highest ideal of the other by loyalty to truth and to community principles.

Criticism revealed all secrets, so that nobody

was tormented with a "skeleton in the closet"; even lovers' secrets, that are usually considered too private for the light, were freely considered in criticisms if they contained anything that shunned the light of truth. There being no secrets, confidences rested on the solid foundation of truth, of which criticism was a mighty champion. By it all mistakes as well as temptations were rectified, and all hearts were educated in the happiness of harmonious blending. Many well-meaning people, with the utmost consideration for others and the best of intentions, who through ignorance or innate obtuseness were unable to adapt their ways to the sensibilities of others, learned through criticism, much to their surprise and gratification, what they could not have acquired in any other way.

Continence was the watchword of the Perfectionists. It was applied in all departments of life. Without it their social theory could not have been made a practical success. Nor was continence in love practicable without previous continence in eating and drinking. Continence was a spirit imbuing the life of each member, so that the concensus of continence was a force pervading the atmosphere of the family to such an extent that self-control became easier than under influences where indulgence ruled.

The confession of the spirit of Christ was also

a help to the more complete subjection of self, and was used by the Perfectionists in all instances where they felt the need of reinforcing their power of self-control. It was a never failing source of strength.

Different minds will adopt different philosophies in explanation of this phenomenon, but there can be no doubt that the power derived from such confession in the person of the individual using it was proportionate to the faith of the individual in the efficiency of the appeal. At all events, help always came, not only to the older people, but in the "children's house"; in the mouth of babes the expression acted like a charm. No matter how insubordinate the child, or how perverse, if it could be induced to say: "I confess Christ a good spirit," clouds and tears at once gave place to sunshine and smiles.

CHAPTER VII

"Parentage."

STIRPICULTURE is a term that originated with John H. Noyes to designate progression of man through attention to selection in parentage.

Many object to any line of thought that links man with animal life, or that subjects him to the same law of nature that governs reproduction in other animals. They are right to the extent only, that in the propagation of conscious beings, higher psychological conditions must enter into the consideration than are involved in the breeding of lower animals. Consciousness complicates the problem of breeding in as much as the progression of spiritual life is added to the consideration of physical development. It is a step in advance of that branch of stock-raising wherein temperament and constitution form important features, pointing to the still more important demand of consciousness for environments fitted for a brain that has become spiritualised through heredity.

Conceding this much does not greatly mitigate the wickedness of those affecting to be horrified at the idea of making any comparison between

man and lower animals. Whatever prejudice may be indulged in against evolution, it cannot be denied that comparative anatomy is a science beyond dispute.

There is real ground for horror in the fact that while the most careful attention is given to improving the types of lower forms of life, men and women defy natural laws relating to wise selection of the fittest, and consort wholly regardless of the parentage of future generations.

Millions are spent upon improving the breed of domestic animals, but men and women permit themselves to be influenced by the most sordid motives, such as position in society or financial considerations, oblivious of their liability to produce either genius or idiocy, health or disease.

The few who have the goodness of heart to discuss the subject lean to the physical rather than to the moral or intellectual development of man, and thereby miss the mark of the higher ideal. The Oneida Community during many years refrained from discussing the perpetuation of communism through right parentage. They had made an advance of enormous importance on the custom of the world by the adoption of complex marriage, and before making further innovations they waited for public morality to rise to the level of that movement.

Parentage being a natural law, it could not be

indefinitely ignored, and when the time came for something to be attempted in that direction, John H. Noyes started the study of the subject under the title of "Stirpiculture" and proposed action in that line.

They who are at all conversant with descriptions of stock-farms and the reports of scientific systems of improving breeds of animals, are prepared to form some idea of the numerous conditions that have to be carefully studied and prepared, the lack of any one of which may be a complete bar to the attainment of a desired result. Breeders draw charts of animals which they propose to produce, and selecting the specimens best adapted to their plans, patiently persevere in processes of selection through many generations, continually pairing those most nearly approximating their standard until after many years of assiduous observation and experiment they realise their ideals. The same is true of the cultivation of fruits, flowers, vegetables, and cereals. Before any known civilisation or any history now extant, a scientific selection produced the banana from wild seed-bearing fruits, and wheat and other cereals from wild grasses. Whenever man has attempted through cultivation to adapt the spontaneous productions of nature to his use, his efforts have been crowned with success. Co-operation of science with natural

law has always been attended with satisfactory results, leaving no doubt that such co-operation of human consciousness forms an indispensable part of God's plan of evolution. It is impossible to suppose that God would be at so much pains to develop human consciousness, and then ignore it. If human consciousness is a part of evolution, the co-operation of that consciousness must necessarily be also part of the same plan of progression. Yet no large class of people have ever thought of applying any system of scientific co-operation with nature for improving the human race; or, if they have, social ethics and popular prejudice have deterred them from attempting any practical experiments.

It would be surprising if such a palpable possibility as cultivation of the human race had entirely escaped observation by the Grecian intelligence. But, with all their learning, they had not the goodness of heart to strike out a humane line of stirpicultural action. The Spartans made the nearest approach to experimenting in this direction, but their efforts were confined exclusively to physical development. That they succeeded in producing such remarkable warriors demonstrates nature's readiness to respond to efforts in the cultivation of humanity as well as in that of animals.

The Spartans could only appreciate develop-

ment of physical strength, therefore their mighty warriors were intellectual pigmies. As a people they were most superstitious, and ranked among the lowest in intelligence of any of the Grecian States.

If goodness, rather than physique, had been the Spartan ideal, equally striking results would have followed their efforts, and superior goodness conserving physical powers would have saved Greece from the emasculating debaucheries which led to her ruin.

If development in other departments of nature had been unaided by the intelligence of man, no number of ages of natural selection would have perfected grain and other edible vegetation so that the earth would be capable of affording sustenance for more than one-tenth of its present population; but the abundant harvests of fruit and grain indicate what progress might have been made by the people if the same attention to development had been bestowed upon themselves as upon other products of nature.

Notwithstanding the extraordinary achievements of science in agriculture, horticulture, and stock-breeding, the world's supply is so related to the needs and extravagances of the people that many starve while others die of excess, but the causes of such discrepancies must be traced to man's inept use of God's beneficent provisions.

The first and most immediate cause of all the deprivations from which humanity suffers is diversion of intelligence from the legitimate channels of co-operating with nature in the evolution of the race, and turning it in the direction of abnormal devices for the gratification of abnormally developed desires.

Man has aided nature in the development of his food supplies and her response has usually been in excess of his expectations, but he has opposed her in failing to give the same attention to the development of his race that he has paid to the cultivation of food products and the developing of fancy strains of stock. Nature is so prolific in all her provisions that nothing but the reproductive imprudence of the people could over-reach the limit of her food supply, so that a scarcity of food is due to the failure of the development in human nature of that self-control which would render the demand for food commensurate with the food supply. Famines in one section are counterbalanced by plenteousness in others. There is no lack of food in the world, but so long as men cultivate so little consideration for their fellows as to propagate recklessly and also to convert large proportions of food products into alcohol for the debasing of their race, so long must famine and kindred calamities continue.

Man has not only failed to co-operate with nature in seeking to elevate his race; he has sought to pervert nature in such a way as to place himself under a ban, for no natural law can be infringed with impunity, each delinquency necessarily creating the retribution incident to it. By seeking to stimulate and gratify his animal propensities, instead of developing his spiritual nature, man has over-populated the world with a relatively worthless progeny. That is to say, he has recklessly added to the numbers of his race without reference to its relative proportion to sustenance, and without reference to any scientific considerations as to the quality of his offspring; therefore, if the progeny happens to prove relatively valuable, it is due to the interposition of some preservative law of heredity persisting in spite of adverse conditions.

Against all precedent in nature, man has by brute force usurped the prerogative of the physically weaker sex; so that while in all nature the female invariably invites attention, through provisions as unmistakable as they are unobtrusive, man alone snaps his fingers at nature and says: "Woman is at my beck and call, she is mine, she shall be an accommodation to my desires, she shall have as many children as I choose to beget or as may be the fruits of indulgence of my passion." The consequence

of this perversion of natural law is a vast population who have come into the world without sufficient provision for the necessities of life, and handicapped by the worst kind of pre-natal and immediate post-natal conditions, viz., that of being an undesired and inevitable incubus. Such a population and similar conditions persist, flooding the world with poverty and ignorance instead of prosperity and intelligence. The efforts of nature to counteract the effects of man's perversions bring wars, pestilence, and famine, as naturally as disregard of hygienic conditions induces fevers to burn out the bad effects of unnatural living.

Before primitive man had been developed, evolution was preparing a fitting instrument for the expression of consciousness, by selecting through animal instinct the fittest to procreate; as consciousness developed, intuition took the place of instinct, and the female element being by nature more intuitional than the male, provided better conditions for co-operation with nature in the progression of the race; therefore nature provided her with the means of initiating any advance in the subject in which she was clearly the more concerned.

All animal life has been obedient to its instinct; but in man, inflated consciousness has dominated his intuition so that he plumes him-

self upon being, as he has the right to be, a lord of creation, while in fact he is the abject slave of his abnormally developed passional nature.

Education is not enough, it must be accompanied by an intelligent system of love relations, so that when through education or other means a desired brain development has been achieved, it may not be lost by injudicious mingling with undesirable strains, but be intensified and made permanent by an infallible intuition which will surely follow any intelligent attempt to improve humanity by looking for the best conditions and traits most desirable for transmission.

When both men and women shall have developed their intuitional natures, it will matter little who leads in the union of the sexes, for intuition in humanity is almost as generally true as is instinct in animals; but until men have acquired the refinement of a higher nature, it is more appropriate for women to lead, as being the more intuitional, and that being her position in accordance with natural law. Until the subject of intuition has become better understood, people will be liable to mistakes in stirpiculture; humanity is too complicated to be treated simply as a scientific subject—science alone will never master it, a higher intelligence must direct, and that direction can only come by intuition or through

necessity. A higher intelligence, by natural processes of evolution, has persistently throughout all ages promoted higher civilisations and necessarily higher types of manhood, unaided by human effort, except as human actions have been controlled by circumstances.

The intensification of tribal traits through long periods of clannish exclusiveness and the merging of varying tribes and nations with their characteristic traits by means of conquest and captivity, have constituted nature's plan of evolution in the absence of more enlightened means of progression. It needs no comment to suggest how much time, bloodshed, and suffering might have been spared, if human consciousness had been exercised in supplementing the efforts of nature to improve the race. But man was not intelligent enough to apprehend his latent power, nor, with all his marvellous exploits in other directions, has he yet risen to appreciation of his responsibility to future generations in caring that they are properly begotten and well born.

History is replete with evidences of nature's plan of promoting higher civilisation through suffering from the sword followed by pestilence, famine, and all the cruelties that man can be capable of inflicting. Christ was a product and a part of nature's evolution; He said, "I came to bring a sword upon the earth"; yet He was

called "The Prince of Peace." So long as man failed in rightly interpreting His teachings they quarrelled about them, so that the sword of their Christianity was never sheathed, and the torrents of blood that have drenched the earth during the Christian era have been among the greatest factors in the evolution of civilisation since the world began. Out of that period of unprecedented cruelties the Anglo-Saxon race emerged, developing a civilisation wherein its faults appear more flagrant by contrast, but in which abstract truth has been sought with more enlightened earnestness than by any other race. Their best element was driven to seek protection from persecution on the shores of America. As Christianity continued to unfold, its central truths commenced to dawn upon the consciousness of the people.

The Quakers sought to demonstrate that fighting was no longer necessary to secure people in their rights. The Oneida Communists demonstrated that conquest and captivity were no longer necessary to the evolution of civilisation. Their organisation was evidence that men and women were preparing to co-operate with nature by wisely selecting the parentage of future generations, avoiding the evil consequences of war by attaining in a peaceful and scientific way that mingling of life which nature had hitherto been

unable to effect by other means than conquest and captivity, because of the ignorance of the people.

In proportion as the masses apprehend the spirit of Christ, the reason becomes more obvious why His mission must needs have brought a sword so long as the world remained in such dense ignorance that they could appreciate no higher tribunal than physical force. As intelligence develops, the true genius of Christ's teaching becomes more apparent, and to such as can receive Him He reveals Himself as "The Prince of Peace." The same power that kept two or three hundred members of the Oneida Community living together for over thirty years on terms of the closest intimacy without a quarrel or discord can, under similar conditions, keep as many millions of people in the same bond of peace. Such conditions are the fruition of the spirit that induced the Mayflower immigration.

The continent of America presented to older civilisations visions of a promised land, to which all nations of the earth have contributed of their populations, merging their lives in the production of a new race; not through conquest, nor by design of man, but by an evolution that a Christian civilisation made possible through peaceful rather than warlike methods.

From the landing of the Pilgrims to the present day, history plainly indicates that Christianity is a dominating influence in the evolution of the coming race. Revival after revival among the Christian populations has tended to enlighten and broaden their conceptions of the Christian religion; preparing conditions for the higher development of man by processes more refined than violence and strife.

In proportion to the broadening of their religious views, people become more tolerant; bigotry gives place to liberality; clannish or creed exclusiveness ceases to be a bar to the intermarrying of different races; the obstacles which have stood in the way of nature's paramount and most persistent purposes give place to co-operation, and continued evolution of the human race toward a higher life becomes a possibility without the intervention of the sword. Under such conditions wars must of necessity cease, because when people become sufficiently enlightened to procreate with a view to developing intellectual and spiritual rather than physical traits they will be much too intelligent to wantonly destroy life or to act upon the absurdity that such destruction could affect the merits of any issue. War is an incident only to certain conditions of man's evolution. Those conditions, with their incidents, are rapidly

passing away. Nature evolves by creating demand and supplying it. While supply is the inevitable result of demand, supply cannot be provided without previous demand, so that cessation of demand involves cessation of supply. When conditions of ignorance are superseded by intelligence there will no longer be demand for war, hostilities must therefore necessarily cease. Already the tendency of the best intelligence is toward arbitration rather than campaigns. The soldier's occupation is vanishing. There are indications that fighting is passing off to sea. The destructive force of a navy has assumed such formidable proportions that the lion and the lamb must needs contrive some means of lying down together rather than risk bombardment. The battle is no longer to the strong; brain has more to do than muscle with the issues of modern warfare. Expediency as well as love appeals to advanced intelligence, and relegates war to the ignorance of past experiences.

Evolution is making such rapid strides that, almost within the memory of a generation, a new race has evolved that is distinctively American. It remains for Americans to set an example to the world of co-operating with evolution by giving at least as much attention to the production and rearing of their progeny as they do to the raising of their pet animals and their crops.

It is immaterial to what causes may be ascribed the discovery and peopling of the American continent, whether to chance, evolution, nature or the direction of Providence, the fact is indisputable that material eminently adapted for producing a civilisation far in advance of the present has been accumulating in the United States by peaceful methods as widely different from the antiquated method of evolution by conquest and captivity as the coming civilisation promises to differentiate from the past.

Among this vast stock of material, the enormous importance of the Semitic race is significant of the possible part the Hebrew race may take in approaching changes. No less significant is the growing emancipation both of Jew and Anglo-Saxon from bigotry and race exclusiveness which in the past has been an insurmountable barrier to the mingling of those ancient and modern civilisations. When Jews and Anglo-Saxons freely intermarry, there will be a valuable conservation, not of the peculiar traits of a pure blooded race, but of the more advanced and best characteristics of both.

What is called "pure blood" of any type is not progressive. It is too narrow. Its tendency is too much toward pride of genealogy. People relying upon admiration of past achievements and reputation of ancestors, deteriorate. Pride sup-

plants appreciation of personal merit. The history of nations demonstrates the wisdom of processes of evolution in which nature develops intelligence by the mixing up of differing civilisations by sinking the old in the oblivion of preparation for the new.

The brightest prospect for the future of America is that no ancestors will be worshipped, and merit will be awarded to the personality of the period.

Heroism of to-day contrasts brilliantly with the patriotism of the past, and progressing philanthropy is proving the increase of brotherly love.

The brightest spot in the history of America will be her peaceful communistic enterprises, in which the Oneida Community will be recognized as a guiding star demonstrating the possibility and pointing the way to a realisation of the universal brotherhood of man.

CHAPTER VIII

"A definition of spiritualism."

In attempting to define the position of John H. Noyes with regard to spiritualism, it becomes necessary to enter into some analytical consideration of that subject, to present his views in a way that will be intelligible to the average reader, and at the same time avoid injustice to the intelligence of those who strictly follow the teachings of Christ.

The term spiritualist has found its way into the popular vocabulary, like many other words, without the function of conveying any definite meaning. The word as popularly used being delusive, it will be better to ignore the general use while seeking truth in reference to the subject.

Any person who believes in the continuity of life is a spiritualist in the strictest sense of the word. If the continuation of life is to be accepted, it must continue in the line of evolution; in other words, in accordance with nature's inevitable law of progression, and must therefore be perpetuated on some higher plane than a material one. Progression being necessarily a refining process, the condition of continued life must be more subli-

mated. This involves the disappearance of an environment which to man, in his present state, appears material. In so far as such a condition of life is indicated by the term "spirit," believers in continuity of life must of necessity be spiritualists. In that sense John H. Noyes was decidedly a spiritualist.

That life continues and retains its consciousness or identity is a fundamental proposition of the Christian religion. It cannot, of course, be demonstrated, but there are people who, through cultivation of their intuitional nature, know intuitively that this doctrine of Christianity is true. Some have become so sensitive to impressions from higher intelligences that they are enabled to speak, write, or act under such influence; this is called inspiration. All so-called original thought partakes of this character.

John H. Noyes was a firm believer in this phase of spiritualism, but it may readily be surmised that if he accorded to each of his followers the equal right with himself to claim inspiration there might arise a clash of inspirational thought that would undermine his influence. The impossibility of such a state of things occurring, and the improbability of Mr Noyes arrogating to himself a right that he did not accord to others, will appear from the following considerations. Conceding, for the present pur-

pose, the spiritual hypothesis as contained in the teachings of Christ and of His disciples, there is this much of circumstantial evidence to corroborate it. In all histories there has cropped out a belief in the possibility of spirit communication. From most ancient times the manifestations have partaken of the same characteristics, requiring similar conditions and subject to the same objections and drawbacks that characterise them in the nineteenth century, but they are marked by this very important feature running through almost their entire history. No matter how much they may differ as to other subjects, from the earliest communications to those of the present day, they have been nearly unanimous in the testimony that the intelligences communicating are spirits of people who have lived upon this earth. So far as known, there has been hardly an exception to the unanimity of this testimony. People will attach importance to the coincidence only in so far as they appreciate the value of such circumstantial evidence. So far as it has any value as testimony it substantiates the Christian creed. Supposing that creed to be correct, there must be wiser intelligences in other spheres than in this, and as many gradations of conscious life as in this, from the greatest philosophers down to the veriest fools. So that, in keeping with affinitive principles of chemistry wherein like attracts like,

they who seek inspiration indiscriminately, if they attract any spirit, are liable to come under the influence of an intelligence either on or below the level of their own mental and spiritual attainments. Christ claimed for Himself and for His followers inspiration from the highest Source of intelligence, which would guide them into the way of all truth. That precluded the possibility of contradictory inspirations, inasmuch as the spirit of truth is a spirit of unity; and the believers were warned to be careful in their intercourse with spirits, and to try them, whether they were of the truth or not. Mr Noyes did not claim any exclusive right to inspiration, but he exercised his right to discriminate between the spirits, and he encouraged his followers to do the same. In this he followed strictly the Christian text that **a spirit of disunity is incompatible with the spirit of truth.** This ruled out all inspiration that was inharmonious; and while it accorded the freedom of each to personal inspiration, it demanded of all the exclusion of any and every influence that tended to inharmony.

The limiting of inspiration may at first sight appear arbitrary, but it was no more of an infringement upon the rights of the individual than are limitations in any other department of life. If people are not sufficiently educated or progressed to place restraints upon their own thoughts and

desires they will surely be limited by the enactments of society, or by natural law operating through environment in other ways; this is so universally true that it may be regarded as an axiom.

If a man voluntarily imposes limitations upon himself, the consciousness of power over environment carries dignity and self-respect with it. By the exercise of self-restraint he comes into such unity with the Godhead that he begins to realise his own potentiality by virtue of that union. This is the highest ideal of freedom, therefore Christ said: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." No man can be free who has not the desire and the power to control himself.

The idea of individual independence, meaning personal freedom irrespective of freedom to others, is simply foolishness, because **everything in nature is interdependent, independence being absolutely impossible.**

There cannot be true freedom excepting as it is acquired by coming into complete harmony with the spirit of truth; this was the freedom enjoyed by Oneida Communists, but so little appreciated by the public that they construed it into constraint. **These Perfectionists, who had been drawn together by the law of love, knew no greater delight than to deny themselves for the good of others.** Therefore it was no con-

straint upon any of them to submit an imagination to the test of a genuine inspiration.

The brain, like other members of the body, is only mechanical; that is to say, apart from its vitalising force, it has no life, so that looking beyond the machine called brain, there is something psychological, which is called mind. This force cannot be defined; it stimulates into activity the marvellous mass of histological elements and intricate connections which constitutes brain, but which has no function except as it becomes related to and is controlled by mind. As this force keeps the brain and all parts of the body in action, their various functions are derived from, and are entirely dependent upon, their relation to mind.

Thinking is the function of mind. Brain cannot originate thought. Thought is the Power behind all the forces of nature, and mind appropriates just so much of that Power as its grade enables it to understand, and thought is thus reproduced. It was to bring forth something capable of utilising this Power that nature travailed during millions of ages, and that she still persists in evolving to higher capabilities.

From mineral to animal life, through interminable changes that constitute evolution, nature has sought to produce brain of a quality capable of such intricate molecular agitation as enables it

to respond to a thought. The first thought became the base for further thought, and by slow degrees brain developed with use as limbs develop with exercise, resulting in cellular construction of tissue that became hereditary.[1] Brain develops by the exercise of mind function, and mind is enabled to comprehend higher thought by the evolving of more intricate molecular activities.

Soul, with responsive environment, and environment with corresponding consciousness, is the aim of evolution. Its processes are in accord with nature's mode by which every form of life absorbs lower forms, and promotes them to participation in higher forms of force. Minerals are absorbed and converted into vegetable force, which by absorption and transmutation become animal force. Man forms tissue out of these lower forms of force, and brain feeding upon the tissue transmutes it into thought force. Thought transmutes physical force into spiritual life, so it will be apparent that until the lower forms of life had sufficiently progressed, the evolution of a highly intelligent being was an impossibility,[2]

[1] Either by the inheritance of functional modifications, or by natural selection, or by some more direct process at present uncomprehended by us, or by a combination of two or all three of these agencies.

[2] This and other statements in the present chapter, logically involve the doctrine—unescapable on Hegelian principles—that there has in the past been an evolution in the grade of intelligence of Deity Itself from an absolute origin. However blasphemous

because man could not feed upon rock, and he could not provide brain with suitable food until nature had evolved something that was transmutable into tissue. Transmutation of physical force into that of a higher form is in keeping with Paul's idea of the incorporeal body, built up by thought-transmutation, and necessarily partaking of the quality and characteristics of what it feeds upon. Such a body cannot be cognised by man for the only reason that his perceptive faculty is limited, but when brain shall have increased its capacity to respond to higher vibration the incorporeal body will appear as real as the physical body does now.

Nobody understood better than John H. Noyes that a new epoch was dawning in human experiences, and that, as a natural sequence, humanity was becoming more and more familiarised with psychological subjects, and with extraneous[1] intelligences, so that it became of paramount necessity to establish a standard by which the difference between the true and the unreliable inspirational influence could be clearly defined.

this doctrine may seem to orthodox susceptibilities, it is not unscriptural, and will ultimately have to be reckoned with by the religious as well as by the opponents of religion.

[1] Extraneous, that is, to our *Egos*, but not necessarily or probably extraneous to our *brains*. Our Egos are evidently but an exceedingly small fraction of the total noumenal or ejective counterpart of brain tissue.

The original Perfectionists had proved the inspiration of their leader, and were satisfied with it; the second generation were taught to trust as their parents had, but it was deemed expedient to forestall the inspirational influences that were crowding upon public attention by learning as much as possible of modern spiritualism. A systematic investigation of the subject was inaugurated, both as a means of education to younger members and as a concession to a growing appetite in the world to know something of a spiritual life. It was also considered that while spiritualistic phenomena tended to accentuate the conviction of future life, spirit communication compared so unfavourably with inspirational thought that by contrast the lack of the genuine ring of truth would be rendered more apparent in the spurious inspiration.

Mr Noyes was by no means a stranger to the facts of spiritualism that struggled for recognition under the incubus of fraud. He avoided spiritualists for a time because they affiliated with free-lovers of the irresponsible type, and brought upon their cause the unsavoury odour of licentiousness.

It was of great importance at that juncture, that the system of complex marriage should not become associated in the public mind with the selfish pleasure seeking of free-lovers. Free-

lovers and spiritualists were consequently considered equally unwelcome as visitors at the Oneida Community. Moreover, spiritualism was discountenanced because of the promiscuous affiliation with influences which subjected its votaries to the control of anything that came from another plane without questioning or caring whether they were in contact with a higher or a lower consciousness. The unhealthful stimulus which superstition secured from such indiscriminate communication was also considered antagonistic to the principles of communism.

In the course of time spiritualism purged itself of many of its objectionable features, and as faith and good sense in the Community had become sufficiently developed to see through the silly superstitions with which many of the spiritualists deluded themselves, the former objections no longer obtained.

Agnosticism had attracted some attention from a few of the younger people in the Community, and it was thought that a more intimate knowledge of the facts of spiritualism might be an appropriate foil to the no-facts of agnosticism. This, more than anything else, was probably the incentive to taking up a study of psychology.

CHAPTER IX

"Investigation of Spiritualism in the Oneida Community."

Dr Theodore R. Noyes, the eldest son of the Founder of the Community, having studied analytical chemistry at Yale, and being a careful observer withal, he was considered, above all others, the most appropriate man to institute a system of original research into the subject of spiritualism, so the matter was placed in his hands. Investigations at first related to temperament of various members, and from among those who were found probably available, a number were selected who were found to be the more sensitive. From these were again selected a few who were thought to be the best adapted for mediumship, and a series of seances were commenced. A darkened room was constructed for the initial experiments, but occasionally a seance was held in the large hall in the presence of the entire family; at other times, smaller meetings were arranged in one or other of the public sitting-rooms.

The experiments are of more than ordinary interest, because those who were chosen for mediumship had been brought up in the Com-

munity from childhood, and were of such character that there was no possibility of deception on the part of the medium, so that this very important element of uncertainty was entirely eliminated; otherwise, the phenomena obtained in no way differed from those occurring in ordinary seances; there still persisted other apparently insuperable difficulties, which are encountered by all investigators of psychology.

A member of the Oneida Community who was not conspicuous in the investigations and who wishes to be understood as expressing only his own conclusions without committing any other members to his views, gives his experience in watching the development of spiritualism in the Community. It formed an important part of his education under John H. Noyes, which has continued to mature both before and since the Oneida Community relinquished communism. "Before joining the Oneida Community I had been 'converted,' and had for years been actively engaged in promoting religious movements. Supposing that I came as near being a good Christian as most people, I was somewhat startled to find that the Perfectionists required conditions of spiritual life that I was incapable of comprehending. They criticised me so persistently for not being 'spiritually

minded' that I felt like giving up in despair of ever approaching their ideal. My conduct in social matters was generally commended, but I was continually found wanting in 'spirituality.' Such criticism was so disappointing and persistent that I settled down to more than ordinary consideration of things, but the only conclusion I could arrive at was that I was associated with some exceedingly good people—the kind that I had vainly sought in the churches; they were the best people in every sense that I had ever met, but they seemed to be a little crazy on the subject of spirituality. I could not quite understand them, nor the power that held me in their midst. Mr Noyes wrote me an exceedingly kind letter. It seemed as if he knew exactly what was passing in my mind. He urged me to get a spiritual mind. He said, 'Let me give you a soft heart, my dear brother; catch it from me. Open your heart, and let me pour it into you.' His kindly expression much affected me, and I was bewildered. I could understand how I could get ideas from his teaching, for I had learned more from him than from any other man; but how he could give me, or how I could catch from him anything more sublime than an idea, was entirely beyond my comprehension. At this juncture Mr Noyes talked about 'going home.' He said,

'Let every individual go home into his heart many times a day, and seek to know God for himself. Let every one have a place where he can retire from the confusion of external business, and reflect and watch in his heart. We shall never have a concentration that will be worth anything until each one knows the value of going to God and learning how to make a quiet, heavenly home in his own heart. I am sure, if this practice becomes a fashion among us, we shall, each one of us, contribute to the quietness and serenity which flow from fellowship with God; and when we put our contributions together, our peace will be like a mighty river.

"'I hope all will give this principle a fair trial, and see if it does not insure them purer, evener lives. When you find yourselves with nothing in particular to do, go to your rooms and turn into your hearts. Go home and talk with God; He will give faith and peace. . . .

"'Let us be wise in time, and establish a purpose in all hearts that we will go home to God and stay there. . . .

"'It is a great attainment to abide serenely with God, let outside distractions be what they may. When we have learned to do that, we can pass unhurt through the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds. Dwell deep. Live in your hearts, where the world cannot come; for

then the Lord, who is your Shepherd, will lead you by the side of still waters.'

"This talk so impressed me that I made a point of sitting alone for half an hour every day and giving myself up to such influences as may be attracted by concentration of thought upon the highest ideal of good. Soon the idea dawned upon me that extraneous intelligence[1] really did impress those who placed themselves in the attitude of mind requisite for receiving such impression. I had heard much of Professor Crookes and of his valuable discoveries, so that my superficial objections could not stand against the careful research of such a scientist; and when Mr Noyes started the investigation of modern spiritualism, the experiment carried on in the Community interested me in proportion as my prejudice waned.

"Sitting alone, seeking to clear my mind as much as possible from all bias, I began to see things in a different light from that in which they had before appeared. This does not imply clairvoyance, but I was conscious of seasons of mental illumination that gave me ability to grasp ideas that had previously appeared to be impene-

[1] When one compares the stupendous multiplicity of physical facts within a human brain with the relative paucity of psychical facts contained within a human Ego, it becomes very comprehensible how the Ego may be impressed by intelligence extraneous to its circle of consciousness, without looking beyond the brain for the source of that intelligence.

trable, and I began to feel the force of my past criticisms.

"I adopted the spiritual hypothesis as being the most simple solution of phenomena that I cannot explain in any other way, and because of its coincidence with the teachings of Christ and with the bias of my previous religious training. I took into consideration the objection 'that such a conclusion shuts off all further investigation,' but dismissed it, because a denial of the spiritual hypothesis is still more objectionable in that it not only deprives investigators of the protection from evil influences that a knowledge of spiritual philosophy would afford, but it shuts off all incentive to seek a philosophy that will account for spiritual activity.

"The first conclusion that I settled upon after being confronted by phenomena that seemed to be incomprehensible was, that it is impossible there can be anything either supernatural or infra-natural; such terms relate to and originate in ignorance and superstition. They are words that have no meaning, because the states they were intended to express have no existence. Nothing can occur that is not the direct effect of some causation, and all causation being some process of nature, it follows that all phenomena must have a philosophy that can only be understood by starting with some hypothesis founded

on natural law; so that when superstition is eliminated from psychological research, spiritualism can be studied as a law of nature. Continuity of life is almost universally conceded, not because it can be easily comprehended, but because it is more easy of comprehension than is cessation of life. As life continues by infinite changes called evolution, there must be a vital connection between all such changes of such a nature as to preserve the identity of life, and to relate one state of existence with the other."

So long as Mr Noyes was in the body, his presence was a check upon fanaticism. A few of his followers had developed mediumship, and after his death, as might be expected, some of them received what purported to be communications from his departed spirit. Of course this was looked upon by many as a dangerous influence, and was vigorously opposed, not so much from prejudice against spiritualism as from a fear that superstitious bias in the average mind would fail to detect the many weak points of spirit communication, and that many trusting souls might be misled by a fantasy. The fact that such claims proved to be an element of discord instead of harmony, is evidence that the inspiration could not stand the old time test.

Brain being a mechanical contrivance, by means of which mind expresses itself, if any mind other

than the one personally related to it can obtain complete possession of the machine, it can for the time being use it to some extent in the same way. To what extent a disembodied spirit can express itself through the medium of a living brain is a very uncertain quantity. That an influence can be exerted by spirit is undoubtedly a fact, but how completely such influence can be exercised is little understood and too little questioned.

For a spirit to express itself through the organism of another person it must be absolutely independent of any bias or interference from the brain it is seeking to impress; and as complete freedom from bias is an impossibility, consciousness must be entirely suspended or bias will dilute the spirit's communication. This involves delicate and intricate processes. It can can only be accomplished after years of cultivation, in which the medium and the controlling influence gradually grow into perfected harmonious relationship. There are some exceedingly rare instances in which the extra-intelligence succeeds in so completely suspending consciousness of the medium, that it is able to evoke responsive vibrations in the brain and give expression to thought that the medium is in no way responsible for nor conscious of expressing. This power is only obtainable after long and careful cultivation, and by taking

advantage of conditions that rarely coincide in the organism of an individual. And then, this extraordinary attainment is always subject to interruption, because of the persistent tendency of consciousness to assume its normal functions, as slumbers may be disturbed by dreams. At best, an extra-intelligence will be unable to express thought that has not previously existed in the mind of the medium. If it seeks to express a thought that is foreign to a brain, it will have first to accustom the brain to the vibrations incident to the sentiment to be expressed; it will have to place it in the brain by simulating the natural process of evolving thought, and accustoming the ganglia to respond to such a vibration as is represented by that particular thought. In such case, when the thought has been evolved it must continue to exist in the subconsciousness of the brain, just as if it had been stored there by the usual process of study.

Apart from such an intricate process, extra-intelligence can only reproduce what it finds in a brain by using the cerebral mechanism. Nothing can be taken out of a repository that has not first been stored in it; this is as true of the brain as it is of a storehouse.

In cases where language is spoken or writings given in a foreign tongue not understood by the medium, the control is only mechanical; it does

not operate through the thought function of brain, and only affects brain sufficiently to suspend consciousness, so that certain mechanical functions of the body may be used without interference from the will of the medium. By such means a spirit sometimes finds it possible to transcribe or express words in a tongue that it has been accustomed to on the earth plane; it will probably be some commonplace platitude that it finds stored in the brain of a medium. Nothing of interest has ever been revealed by such processes beyond the fact that such communications are possible. The inference is that no value is attached to them by higher intelligences other than as a test of spirit existence.

It may be possible for a controlling influence to stimulate activities in the brain into higher vibrations than it has before experienced, so as to induce thought, as before stated, beyond the subconsciousness of the medium, but it can only come by long practice, as a muscle may be forced into extraordinary function by extraordinary exercise and training. The conditions are complicated, and the achievement so extremely rare as to be almost impossible.

Therefore, they who claim to be subjects of control, no less than those to whom communications are directed, will surely find themselves safer in falling back upon sound reasoning, than

in relying upon sources for information that can be no other than unreliable.

The lucubration of a sound mind combined with the impulses of a soft heart will always be receptive to loving influences. That is the only safe channel through which to expect reliable inspiration. It is the only inspiration that will be found sufficiently productive of unity upon which to found successful communism.

CHAPTER X

"Evolution of Events."

THAT "coming events cast their shadows before" is a fact which recurs so frequently in human experience as to suggest the inference that in the economy of nature the shadow is of hardly less importance than the event foreshadowed. It may be that all transactions are consummated in a spiritual sphere before they can transpire on the material plane, as thought must evolve before it can be expressed. In an important sense, thought is the shadow of its expression; it certainly is of vastly more importance than utterance, in so much as utterance is impossible without previous inception of thought, and expression of one's brain may be forestalled by other brain responding to vibrations caused by the thought before it had been uttered. In this line of reasoning may be found some clue to a philosophy of prophecy. Events that have been formulated in a higher sphere may be so foreshadowed on a lower plane that the shadow becomes palpable to the perception of those whose inspirational thought vibrates in unison with thought of that sphere, and a prophet

becomes a possibility, by laws as natural, and by sequences as logical, as any other ordinary occurrence.

The miracles of Christ were reproductions on the sense plane of potentiality in a higher sphere, by which He was enabled to foreshadow to His followers, by virtue of His intimate relation to that spiritual sphere combined with their sympathy and faith in His superior knowledge and power, the possibilities pertaining to those who could become partakers with Him in His spiritual nature. "The things that I do ye shall do also, and greater things than these shall ye do."

Whether this is a sound philosophy or not, it is certain that true Christianity and science are not antagonistic, and that more advanced intelligence must ultimately reconcile all that is true in Christianity with truths demonstrable by science.

It is certain that everything in nature on the sense plane contains within itself a prophecy of its future; it must be equally true that it contains also a fulfilment of prophecies contained in conditions relating to it that have pre-existed, and this must relate to all other planes because natural law is all-pervading, and does not halt on account of the limitations of sense perception. Therefore, it must be assumed that beyond what man can cognise, processes of nature continue to

correspond to changes ever taking place in material things. If a grain of wheat, or any other seed, could be analysed exhaustively, it would be found to contain a history of the plant, that had preceded it, or in the case of man or animal, of its heredity, and a complete prophecy of a full-grown plant or animal would be possible to a perfect intelligence.

Projecting the same prophetic principle into spiritual subjects, it may be expected that coming events would herald their approach by incidents appealing to the consciousness of those whom they affect. An event is as much a matter of evolution as a seed; and like a seed it contains a prophecy of its future. In this sense all events are shadows of other coming events; so that by considering the logical sequence of present circumstances, other events might be predicted that are otherwise incalculable. The education of humanity, from the first gleam of consciousness, has been by a deductive system of reasoning from cause to effect forecasting future events from present experience, and in that way men have learned by the things they have suffered that if they cause a certain event certain other events will naturally follow. Every event, therefore, in a life's experience is an object-lesson for the education of that life. Some may be taught by counsel and good advice, others may learn

from books or lectures, but object-lessons are necessary to the education of the masses, and before the days of books and Lyceums, the only way of learning was by the natural course of deduction from experienced phenomena.

Studying histories of ancient and modern nations it can sometimes be discerned wherein events had cast their shadows before, not to revolutionise the world by sudden impulse, but to afford object lessons that could serve as starting-points for new eras in civilisation, preparing people through gradual educational processes for the fruition of seed thus sown.

The universe, and all pertaining to it, is expressive of intelligence evolving in the ocean of thought. The various civilisations that have existed in historic and prehistoric epochs have been expressions of just so much thought as in any particular civilisation, the consensus of intelligence possessed by the people was capable of attracting and expressing. Every civilisation has been the result of a long period of evolution or incubation, during which the masses had been to some extent educated sufficiently to develop a change, however slight, in brain tissue capable of responding to higher vibrations. The consensus of increased brain activities of the people contributed to the intelligence of a smaller proportion of the population who stood out in bold

relief upon the pages of history, and whose erudition reacted to raise the standard of education among the masses. Through such intricate processes of concentration and reaction, advancing civilisation focussed perhaps in an individual, provided conditions for attracting higher thought, and a flash of unusual brilliancy accompanying its transmission, gave to the world an unusually brilliant character and a new era as the climax of that particular civilisation.

When the first thought was projected that constituted a plane of consciousness, intelligence was too immature to give it recognition, and in the course of many ages, when the consensus of Hebrew intelligence focalised to institute the Christian era, intelligence was still too immature to comprehend it. The truth which Christ promulgated two thousand years ago was so far in advance of that time that the intelligence of the nineteenth century boasted civilisation has not yet sufficiently matured to accept it.

The ministry of Christ was a fulfilment of prophecy and an object lesson prophetic of the universal brotherhood of man which is the dream of communism, that will constitute the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth.

The Oneida Community was also an object lesson in direct connection with the plan of

Christianity, demonstrating the possibility of realising the state of civilisation that Christ foreshadowed, and it was another instance of coming events casting their shadows before.

John H. Noyes was the net product of the New England colonisation, the fruition of the force with which the Mayflower was freighted. He proclaimed again the new dispensation. He revived on the virgin soil of America the simple sentiment of love that Christ inculcated in Judea two thousand years before, and still the people were not sufficiently progressed to accept it. Like Christ, he found a few followers ready enough to emphasise a fact that could serve as an object lesson for future generations, and then it was turned under as Christianity was, like a winter fallow to fertilise for future use.

Mr Noyes predicted the turning under process for his Community when in 1852 he said, in substance, that "Communism like Christianity could adapt itself to any forms, and that while people were looking at the Oneida Community and wondering at the almost miraculous achievement of harmony among so many people, they would yet see the still greater miracle of the Oneida Community breaking up in a way equally harmonious without doing injustice to any soul."

The forces of nature appear to rest, and just as vegetation hibernates, gaining renewed force to

meet the coming spring, so communism bides its time till humanity shall become so enlightened that universal brotherhood will be no longer a prophecy, but love shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea.

The continual turning under of the products of ages of evolution appears at first sight like a reckless waste of energy, but the same is true of all nature. What profusion everywhere! What over-production of everything! What excess of vitality and consequent necessary mortality! But it is all a necessity of nature, for she progresses everything through constant changes, and the more numerous the changes, the more accentuated are the evidences of evolution.

Changes that appear like retrogression, such as death and decay, are evidences of progression, integration and disintegration being the processes which constitute evolution. Integration of anything is an absolute impossibility without the disintegration of something else. This principle applies to worlds and continents, to the people who inhabit them, and to their habits and customs, to their institutions and to every object or subject of life. Integration must be preceded by disintegration. If a seed falls into the ground, it dies that it may live again in another form; the same is true of everything else. Thought is no exception to this principle, for thought is begotten

of thought. Thought that most nearly approximates the truth of to-day is begotten of the thought of yesterday, and as the present perception of truth is more correct than the past, the thought of yesterday is superseded. It has disintegrated to integrate more advanced thought.

Prehistoric nations, with their civilisation, disintegrated and produced the civilisations of Egypt and India. As nations progressed intellectually, arts and sciences engaged their attention to the comparative exclusion of physical development. As an intellectual people they became less warlike, and an easy prey to neighbours who cultivated exclusively their physical prowess. These becoming conquerors led captive intelligent populations and used them as slaves. The comparatively refined slaves employed in the homes and the families of their captors, naturally became teachers, and thus were instrumental in disseminating among more barbarous peoples knowledge of a higher civilisation, that could have been imparted by no other means.

The history of tribes and of nations, and of the evolution of civilised nations, has been repeated over and over again in successive ages, ever since the foundation of the world, by the brutal instinct of war apparently destroying, but ultimately subserving, a more refined civilisation.

Christianity has waded through seas of blood, leaving no doubt as to the fact that war has been the main feature in the evolution of the present civilisation. It was necessary that Christ as a personality should disintegrate that His spirit might become an integrating force in the primitive Church. Therefore He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."

The primitive Church, as an organisation, disintegrated, and the Church of Rome organised the remnants. The Roman Church held complete sway up to the Reformation, when its power commenced to wane. It has continued to disintegrate from that time.

Disintegration of old organisations with integration of new sects has been the experience of Christendom from the Romish Church to the Salvation Army. In its appointed place came the Oneida Community; it also disintegrated as did the primitive Church, which was its prototype, and then commenced the integration of numerous phases of communism, socialism, populism, and the numerous isms of that genus in which the unrestful spirit of America is seeking some refuge from the growing selfishness of the age. They will all disintegrate, to be succeeded by something only a little in advance, and this routine must continue until in processes of

evolution will be reached the universal dissemination of the brotherly love of which Christ was a prophecy, and of which the Oneida Community was an exemplar and object lesson. This will be an impossibility so long as humanity nurses its ignorance. Education must take the place of superstition, and schoolhouses and athenæums must take the place of bigoted conventicles. Priestcraft is disintegrating and politics are integrating—either is imperfect, but evolution cannot be evaded.

When politics disintegrate, the next change will perhaps be a step toward the congress of nations and the brotherhood of man. The shadow of the coming event is already seen in the growing desire to arbitrate between nations. Development of brain has produced appliances of war so destructive that fighting is too dangerous, uncertain, and expensive for international indulgence.

Brain is the chief factor in coming civilisation; therefore, as may be expected, education is making rapid strides on a scale never known in the history of the world. Millions are disbursed yearly in common schools in England and America, so that wherever a cottage is in sight a schoolhouse is within reach, foreshadowing the universal development of increased brain activities that is the necessary precursor of the recognition of universal brotherhood.

Education implies more than is connected with ordinary studies. People may attain proficiency in letters or excellence in mathematics and be little the better for it morally, but methods of instruction continued through successive generations must, if acquired traits are hereditarily transmissible, tell upon brain texture, and render ganglia more responsive to higher vibrations of thought. And even if "use-inheritance" be a myth, adaptation to the growing complexity of the social environment, must come about by selection—natural or artificial—to say nothing of the possibility that "variation" tends *directly* towards adaptation.

In this sense, man by developing his brain is educating his race, and mental training of the masses means education of generations yet unborn. This is what the term education implies when used in connection with evolution and with the claim that the people will have to be educated up to unselfishness before communism can be a complete success. Christianity and communism demand the same conditions and lead to similar results; they are, in fact, interchangeable terms. Each demands recognition and effects harmonious relationships. They involve facts and conditions lying beyond the material plane, which are, therefore, spiritual truths that cannot be perceived by the natural man, who is biased

against what he cannot see, so that change of heart or of desire must be an important feature of initiation into the higher education.

John H. Noyes made a great point of cultivating "softness of heart" as the most important step towards preparation for communism. He said: "The most radical of all diseases is 'hardness of heart.' This is the very centre and summing up of all the bad conditions of life, and it is a much more common disease than many people suppose. A change of heart from hardness to softness is the special thing accomplished by a true conversion. On the one hand, hardness of heart and impenitence are classed together in the Bible, and, on the other hand, the tender heart is the special gift of the Gospel covenant. 'A new heart will I give you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh.' . . .

"Hardness of heart is the same thing, carried up into our highest spiritual relations, that is known familiarly under the name of indelicacy and coarseness in the manners of ordinary life. We see, occasionally, persons whom we call coarse and indelicate, who do not readily perceive what is unpleasant in social intercourse, who are willing to hurt people's feelings by making sharp remarks, and rather enjoy doing so. That same coarseness, acting in the centre

of the life and in our relation to God, is what we call hardness of heart. It is that which we must be saved from; that which all the thunders of Sinai and all the attractions of the Cross are intended to break up. Only as we become refined in our perceptions and delicate in our feelings towards God shall we be delicate and tender in our feelings towards our fellowmen and treat them fairly. . . .

"That mighty conversion that came into the world eighteen hundred years ago is yet in the heart-depths of human nature, and it is for us to participate in and realise the softness of heart given to the primitive Church through the cross of Christ. That is the experience that all should set before them as the hope of their calling. That is the righteousness of Heaven to which all other good things shall be added."

CHAPTER XI

"Inevitable Progression of Civilisation."

UNDER the feudal system at one period the barons were rich, proud and brutal. They were so illiterate that they could neither read nor write, so that a plan was devised of attaching a seal to deeds for the transfer of real estate and other purposes in substitution for a signature.

Priests were almost the only educated men of that period, and these, disguising their clerical calling, obtained large fees for appearing in Court and litigating disputes between the ignorant barons. Lawyers were then first called "gentle" men from their spiritual connection with the Church, and in contradistinction to warriors, and their title was subsequently created by Act of Parliament. Of course, it was a merely empty title, and like the title of Esquire, gradually lost its original signification by indiscriminate application to all classes, until it became the custom to call every man a gentleman until his behaviour proved him otherwise; so that a lawyer once indignantly asserting that he was a gentleman, was told that it was only by virtue of an Act of Parliament that he ever became one.

If education could in all cases evolve gentleness, refinement of spirit would become characteristic of the race in proportion to the advance of education. That it does not effect this purpose is evident in the fact that while education conserves refinement up to a certain point, it fails to eliminate the selfishness belonging to a coarser order of life. Brain development broadens the intellectual power and under favourable conditions may conduce to the conception of spiritual truth, but it cannot produce a soft heart in the sense implied by regeneration. The natural man cannot know the things of the spirit, because they are spiritually discerned; therefore, when the most highly developed brain shall have mastered all that can be known about things on the material plane, it will still be unable to learn anything of the force that makes material things possible, until it learns to discern spiritual things.

Spiritual perception can only be acquired through regeneration, which is as indispensable to the progress of humanity to a higher life as is the psychological change of chrysalis to the development of butterfly.

When thought develops cerebral structures capable of responding to higher vibrations, this responsive faculty demands thought still higher to which it may respond, and necessarily it con-

tinues to attract still higher vibrations of thought. It will be seen that these processes of evolution must be cumulative; that accelerated activities begetting still higher vibrations, *i.e.*, thought begetting thought, there must come a time when vibrations attuned to material things fail to satisfy the cravings of consciousness; and this yearning of the soul for higher vibrations of thought must lead directly into regeneration as the only portal to experience on a higher plane.

The present era is essentially one of education, tending not so much to the production of colossal intellects as to the lifting of the masses up to a higher standard, equalising the general intelligence, and thereby placing the people upon a platform of more democratic equality. The natural effect of this general intellectual awakening has been an intense impetus to brain activity and an abnormal development of acquisitiveness, unbalanced by the saving counter-action of the influence of love. In building up cellular tissue of brain by continuous application of thought in one direction, love of money has supplanted love of man, and selfishness crowds out communism.

Acquisitiveness is a prominent feature of the Hebrew race. They have been persecuted by all nations during the past eighteen centuries, and have been generally unable to hold real estate

until England passed the Jewish Disabilities Bill some fifty or sixty years ago. Crowded out of customary avenues for investment of their savings, with the danger of being robbed of anything tangible, the Jews were driven to use money as their stock-in-trade. Becoming bankers and usurers, they traded upon the impecuniosity of their persecutors, and by a poetic justice grew to be dictators of the affairs of those who oppressed them. Concentration of mind upon money during many centuries, developed brain power in the direction of finance out of all proportion to the attainment of other people in the same line, and correspondingly weakened them in some other respects.

The inevitable result is that, in America, Jews are gradually gaining the ascendancy in all mercantile pursuits of the country, and in Europe their representative men, such as the Rothschilds and others, control in considerable measure the destiny of the nations. Despite hundreds of years of persecution and cruel pillage, the civilisation in which Christianity was cradled, not only persists, but bids fair to become the future civilisation of the world.

Americans, not to be outdone by the Jews, also concentrated their thought upon getting money, so that rivalry in acquiring wealth and, incidentally, in education as a means to it, has

developed an era of money-making such as the world has never before seen. They who have acquired or inherited the faculty of making money have so much the advantage of their fellows who have not the same talent for finance, that they are enabled to amass enormous fortunes, almost necessarily to the comparative impoverishment of the rest of the community.

While the working men appear for the present to be getting the worst of the strife, the more remote result will perhaps be that capitalists, appreciating the disastrous effects of violence from the impoverished multitudes, will voluntarily provide better conditions for the working classes as a means of self-defence.

So long as brain is concentrated on the acquisition of wealth, they who develop the most brain force in the direction of finance will certainly get the most wealth ; and riches must necessarily rule because this is the era of the domination of the dollar and people are worshipping the golden calf, so that the poorest agitator or the rankest Nihilist would often be willing to become the most "bloated bondholder" if fortune favoured his desire. Distribute the wealth of the world to-day, and the same brain activities that piled up the millions before will aggregate them again by a law as inevitable as that by which liquids seek a level.

If capitalists were the only selfish people in the world, public opinion would denounce them as fools for spending their lives in grasping that which they could neither carry away nor derive any benefit from in another life. When wealth ceases to command adoration from the masses its power and the desire for its attainment will cease, because the public estimation of riches has as much, and perhaps more, to do with the incentive to become rich than has the desire of the fortune maker, so that the complaining multitude is only less culpable than the capitalist it has helped to create, by its public opinion no less than by its labour. It is like the market value of a commodity, which is regulated by the demand, that is by the value which public opinion puts upon it.

Like everything else that pertains to humanity or nature, abuse is the only bad feature in riches. Selfishness is the deplorable thing in capital; it is only less deplorable in the inordinate desires of those who are not rich. The difficulty lies in the lowness of morality and intelligence on the part both of capital and labour.

Intelligence directed into the channel of money getting has developed a certain grade of activity of thought and has lifted the race. It is on the line of evolution. But if the present state of things continued indefinitely the colossal fortunes of the trusts, simply by their inherent force of

creating interest and compounding it, would involve absorption of the entire wealth of the world and consequent enslavement of the majority of the population. That is an inconceivable climax because no system of selfishness persists indefinitely. Change is the order of nature, so that the inconstancy of things pertaining to human experience is a safeguard against the constancy of any one phase of selfishness or the persistency of any particular evil.

Some of the enormous fortunes that are now being amassed, are already commencing to disintegrate and another era is integrating that will be a vast improvement upon the present. Children bred in the lap of luxury do not become the successful carvers of fortunes that their parents had been, notwithstanding that they may have inherited some of their parents' traits, because there will not exist the same necessity that stimulated extraordinary thrift, so that the brain cells that became developed by use in one generation may become atrophied from disuse in the indulgent life of its successor. They disintegrate for the integration of some other development. But what becomes of the fortune? If the possessor dies leaving six children, that divides the fortune by six, and perhaps equally; if each of those children produces six more, that divides it into thirty-six parts and so on. Thus it is

easy to see how in the natural course of things, in a few generations, every large fortune may become distributed among a class of people some of whom will be idle spendthrifts, while a great many others may constitute a leisured class who have received the best education that money could provide, who will spend their fortunes in patronising arts and sciences and in solving the problems of the race. When this learned class has come, founded upon wealth, leisure and culture, then the people will be lifted higher in intelligence; and with more intelligence they will work miracles.

The dispensing of a vast fortune calls for a higher intelligence and a nobler soul than did its accumulation, and the projection into the fields of philosophy and philanthropy of fitting characters for such work, indicates that wealth is already integrating a higher civilisation founded upon the principle of love and upon the communism which Christ inculcated, involving recognition of the principle of the universal Brotherhood of Man.

When consciousness becomes so enlightened that through education and development of science people perceive the logical necessity of a radical change of nature, producing softness of heart, for readaptation of man to the more sublimated environments of his future existence, it will become palpable to all that the teachings

of Christ so many centuries ago, although adapted in their mode of presentation to the relative ignorance of that period, are identical with the scientific conclusions of the present day, and the multitude will become as anxious for regeneration as now they are for gold.

The shadows of coming events that are to revolutionise the world are now gathering on the horizon, indicating a religious awakening that will usher in such an era of revivalism as has never before been experienced. Then the history of the Oneida Community will be studied as a handbook and guide to communism, and the pages of history will portray John H. Noyes as a prophet of the new dispensation.

Previous to any general accomplishment of communism, irrepressible longing of the people will express itself in many fruitless attempts to found communities, societies, associations, and political organisations, all having the same end in view and all failing in its attainment. Such attempts are characteristic of the present time, and they will continue as necessary means to the education of those who can only learn by the things that they suffer. To such it will be useless to explain how unprepared they are for the communism they affect. But there are others who know that selfishness in any form is a complete bar to communistic organisation and will

kill every such attempt until people become sufficiently intelligent to subordinate self, not to a hobby, not to any pet scheme of communism, but to the simple desire to benefit their fellowmen.

The incompetency of leaders to deal with the social problems of the day is demonstrated most plainly in their attempts to ignore the most puzzling and persistent factor in social experience. The sexual relationship of communists being pregnant with influences that are antagonistic to the first principle of communism, it should be one of the first subjects to be most carefully canvassed and satisfactorily disposed of before attempting to launch a socialistic enterprise. Any evasion of this problem must inevitably be followed by failure, for it is insoluble by any other means than the fullest discussion and the most unbiassed philosophy that can be brought to bear upon the subject. Repression may answer for a while, but repression is in direct opposition to the genius of communism, and would therefore be an element of disintegration.

Would-be reformers who lack the independence of thought and the moral courage to fearlessly follow the sexual problem to its logical solution, deceive themselves and their followers while seeking to form a community with communism left out. Not that sexual freedom is

a necessity of communism, but it is absolutely necessary that those contemplating such a movement meet the subject fairly and squarely, and studying the question without prejudice, carry into any communistic experiment the courage of their convictions.

It is not necessary to use liberty, but it is as necessary to a sense of freedom that the spirit be entirely emancipated from bondage to laws and legalistic ethics, as it is to rise above any vicious habit or temptation to wrong a fellow-man. The conditions in either case are provided by regeneration, so that those whose natures have been changed from selfishness to love can be under no temptation to do that against which their natures revolt, and no law or custom can interfere with their victory over themselves.

If it were only a law of nature that reformers had to deal with, the problem would be more simple. But the social difficulty is aggravated by unnatural desires that have become hereditary and intensified in their transmission by continuous indulgence until people mistake their abnormal cravings for legitimate demands of nature, and there are to be found plenty of scientists who pander to the fallacy.

A man who has acquired a habit of stimulating, either by indulgence or heredity, may as

reasonably infer a law of nature tempting him to get drunk, as to suppose that a law of nature impels him to force his attentions upon one of the opposite sex regardless alike of her feelings and of the consequences of his act; perverted nature must needs be changed before communism can be possible, and then it will be demonstrated that "love is the fulfilling of all law," and that questions of crime and its cure, of capital and labour, of purity or prostitution, and all the vexatious problems of life will melt into absolute nothingness under the genial influence of softness of heart.

Communism, as exemplified in the Oneida Community, can undoubtedly be improved upon; they did not claim a perfection that precluded progress; but before its excellency can be approached again, human nature as expressed in the intelligence of to-day must undergo such a radical change as can adapt it to higher environments. Call it conversion or regeneration, or any other term that pleases, it comes to the same thing as Christ proclaimed necessary before entering into a sphere of love: "Ye must be born again," and this was the only platform upon which John H. Noyes found it possible to form a community. They who seek to emulate his success while ignoring his methods, and fear to oppose a public pre-

judice founded upon false estimates of sexual relations, deprive themselves of invaluable information concerning the most interesting, successful, and advanced communistic enterprise in the annals of history. So long as humanity persists in abnormal ways of living, the sexual question will continue to assume an abnormal prominence, and every life will be blighted and every community will be wrecked in which the attempt is made to ignore it.

Men of mark, and great events, grow in public estimation as history unfolds their relation to subsequent civilisations. Christ was unknown except to a few humble followers in Judea. His name is now held sacred in nearly all the civilised nations of the earth, and the truth that he taught is destined to compass the world. All remarkable men must necessarily live before people are prepared for them, or they could not accomplish their mission as leaders. If they came on the stage later, the truth they taught would not be so novel and they would not be considered great men. It was necessary to the mission of Christ that He be put to death as a heretic. If He had come to-day such an event could not have been consummated, because heresy is no longer a capital offence, and crucifixion is obsolete. In a less degree, the same is true of all advanced minds; they are ahead of the intelligence of their day,

and, therefore, cannot be appreciated until intelligence has caught up with their ideas.

Socrates would not have been scorned if he had known no more than other people knew; Galileo would not have been persecuted if men had known what he knew about astronomy. John H. Noyes would not have incurred the contumely of part of Christendom, if his standard of Christianity had been no higher than the Christianity of the churches. It was because he taught a truth beyond the intelligence of the nineteenth century that the American people could not accept it. But as soon as the present intelligence approximates his standard, the people will begin to inquire more about that wonderful seer of whom the world was unworthy. Fortunes are spent in commemorating the works of authors, inventors, scientists, and others whose lives were spent in neglect and penury; so that it is an old story oft repeated that—

> "Seven cities claim the Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

But intelligence is rapidly developing a more prompt appreciation of real merit, and a generation rarely passes away without discovering the genius of its day.

The landing of the "Mayflower" was a simple affair, and if any one at that time could have foretold the results of that immigration, he would

have been adjudged a lunatic. If the people could have foreseen the results of Washington's mission, not one of his enemies would have dared to speak and he would have been spared traducing by less honest men. No mind could have foreseen the influence that the victory of Waterloo has exercised upon the development and civilisation of the world.

Maturing of causes is an infinite evolution, and effects are as far reaching as the influences involving first causation. Events are the culmination of thought, and thought is stimulated by events ; processes of action and reaction being involved in everything in nature.

Consensus of the thought of Christian civilisation evolved revivals of religious enthusiasm, and the net product of revivalism was John H. Noyes and the Oneida Community, as Christ and the primitive Church were the net product of the Hebrew thought, culminating in the Christian civilisation of to-day.

That the Oneida Community ceased to exist as a communistic organisation detracts nothing from the genuineness of the inspiration which crystallised it, and but little, we may hope, from its power as a factor in the evolution of communism. The spirit of that body and the power that projected it are still a vital force, and in time to come such will be the expression of influences

which they transmitted in the realm of thought, that none will feel more gratified in tracing their genealogy than will the descendants of John H. Noyes' system of stirpiculture ; the noble women who are at present under pressure from popular prejudice not to make their past experience too prominent, will rejoice in the reflection that they were accounted worthy to become partakers with John H. Noyes in his labour of love, and their children will point with honest pride to ancestors who were members of the Oneida Community.

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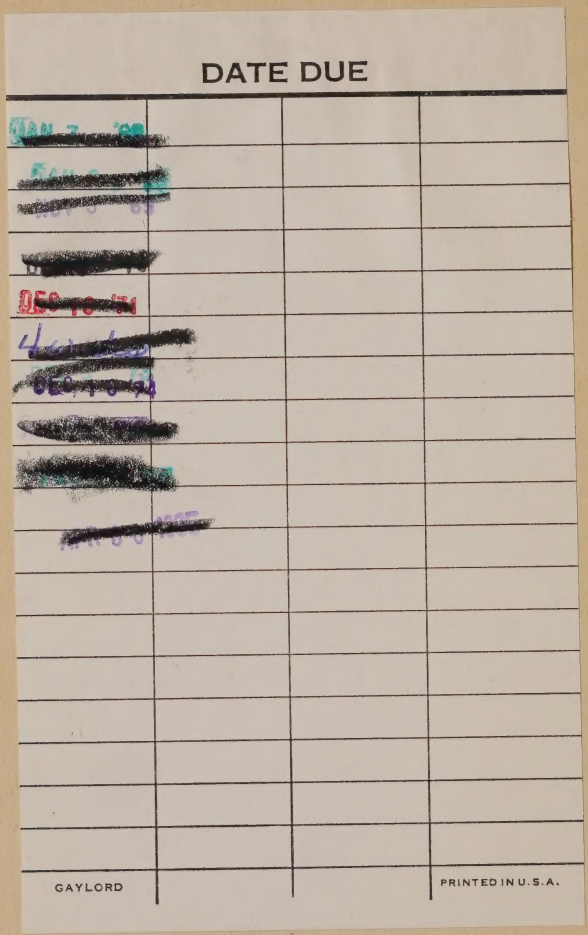
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